BILLIONAIRE

THE SAVOIR FAIRE ISSUE

The Legacy of Craftmanship

COVER • Steinway & Sons: a story of passion and precision

INTERIORS • Decorative wood panelling for the one percent

PHILANTHROPY • The husband-and-wife collectors behind a 100-acre sculpture park

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A WORD FROM THE PUBLISHER

Acting appropriately is a concept that is in constant change, thankfully. What would have been socially acceptable 50 or 100 years ago is no longer so and mostly for good reasons. In the age we live in, I believe, we are required to not only consider our fellow humans but the other species that inhabit this planet and indeed the very place we call home, Earth. Acting appropriately must mean with utmost respect. It is, however, also about doing the right thing, even when perhaps it's not socially acceptable.

This is how we have moved forward, how we have advanced, how we have left behind certain societal norms and replaced them with better or even far better norms. As such, acting inappropriately at times is in fact the right thing to do. Perhaps it should be called savoir-'fair'?

Elevating ourselves and society, striving to do better than what we have done before, obtaining greater heights and depths and understanding of the world we live in, is what we should all be focused on. There are artisans and craftspeople who have through the ages learnt and continue to learn their trade, continue to master their talents and abilities.

We must be grateful to those who sense the importance of our heritage and continue to carry it forward, while still making it relevant to the world we now live in. We must be thankful to those who support such enterprise and who are focused on giving back but also on moving forward. We have much to learn from history; we need to remember not only the mistakes but also the advances.

David Leppan

David Leppan
Publisher and CEO

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Savoir-faire, literally translated as 'know-how'. It's the gestures and knowledge of craftspeople passed down through generations. Many of these crafts are in danger of becoming extinct but, in some cases, they are being rediscovered and commercialised, and that should be celebrated.

In this issue of *Billionaire*, we highlight experts and craftspeople all over Europe who are elevating and reviving ancient techniques; bringing them into the 21st century and beyond.

Take Féau Boiseries, a fifth-generation wood paneller in Paris run by Guillaume Féau. His father had taken the family business down the interior-design road, away from traditional wood panelling. But Guillaume saw the opportunity to revive the old model, and now Féau Boiseries decoration can be seen in some of the world's most famous properties, including Palais Rose in Paris and Villa Ephrussi for Rothschild in Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat (p92).

Staying in Paris, we met Valérie Maltaverne of Ymer & Malta, a former film producer turned furniture designer who engages traditional French artisans and inspires them to elevate their craft, whether tapestry or marquetry, to another dimension (p136).

We cross to Copenhagen where we meet husband-and-wife hatters Cathrine and Peter, behind Hornskov, a fine hatmaker. Based on the small island of Sorø, Peter made it his mission to revive the lost art of hat-making to Denmark and beyond (p52).

In Austria we speak to storied crystal-maker Lobmeyr (p42); in Scotland, we hear from a member of the ancient Grant whisky family (p58); and, in Sweden, we pay a visit to 170-year-old bedmaker Hästens (p112).

Finally, our cover shows a snapshot of the immense work that goes into building a Steinway piano, even more complicated now with the latest Spirio technology. We tour the Steinway factory to meet some of the 200-odd craftspeople who contribute to making the 12,000-part masterpieces (p32).

We hope this issue proves inspirational.

Tara Loader Wilkinson

Tara Loader Wilkinson
Editor-In-Chief

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Cover image: Steinway artisans hand-build a Steinway & Sons piano at its Hamburg factory.

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A busy workfloor at Silverlining Furniture Academy of Skills.

Ancient and Modern

The future of craftsmanship is in your hands.

by Mark Boddington

Imagine reinterpreting timeless hand skills through cutting-edge materials such as carbon fibre, electroconductive ceramics, and self-healing, paper-based Fenix. Picture harnessing the natural properties of abundant, sustainable resources to create unique, never-before-seen forms and finishes.

In recent years, traditional hand skills have been rapidly disappearing, overshadowed by the Western world's technology-focused, digital transformation. However, a resurgence of interest in these ancient techniques is growing, as they become increasingly rare and coveted by leading design and craft commissioners.

Reviving a craft technique is not enough, though. We must see it grow and evolve in the age of machines. Innovation is the key to preserving these ancient skills, whether it's by applying traditional techniques to new materials or programming machines with more human-like qualities. Uniformity is dull, and we must strive to keep craftsmanship vibrant and alive.

Changing the perception of craftsmanship and promoting it as a rewarding career choice, especially for those seeking a better work-life balance post-Covid, is one of our biggest challenges. Creating cooperative, supportive environments where makers can turn their skills and passions into careers is also crucial. Bringing together modern makers, entrepreneurs, and marketers creates a culture where craftsmanship is valued, recognised, and commissioned.

Investing in craftsmanship also supports a critical issue in the modern world: sustainability. With growing awareness of environmental and ethical concerns among Generation Z and mature millennials, customers demand sustainably sourced products made from non-animal, local materials with minimal waste. Turning everyday materials into extraordinary pieces through the skill and ingenuity of craftspeople, is what truly sets craftsmanship apart.

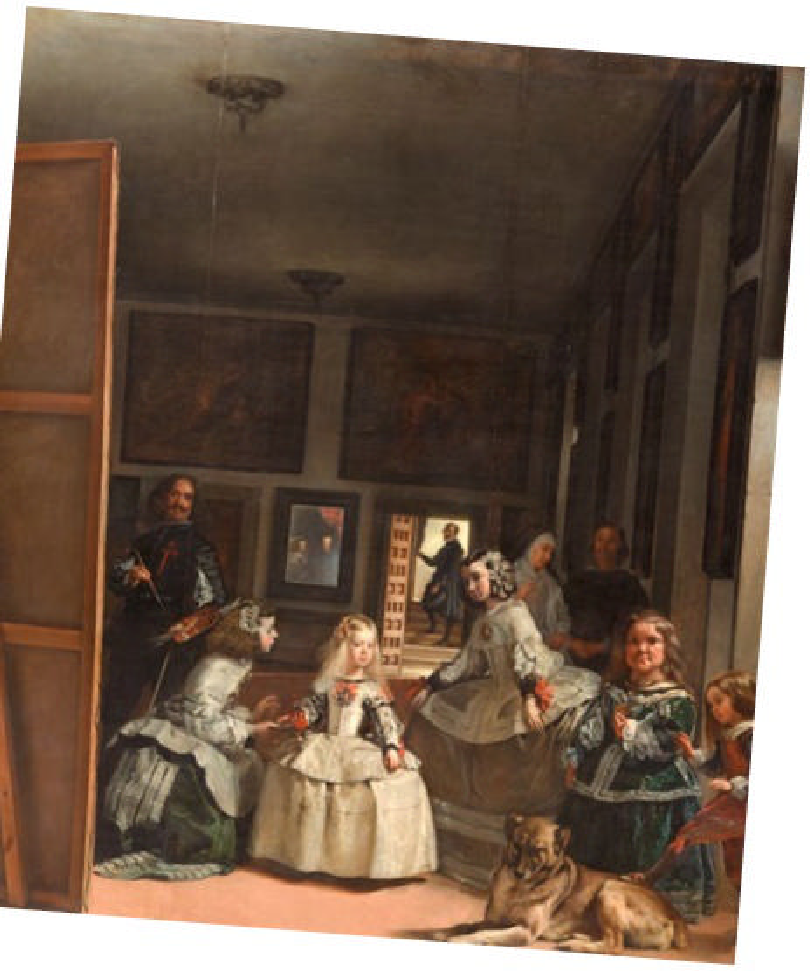
Cork is one of such materials that are abundant in nature, renewable, and when used by designers and skilled craftspeople, can be transformed into the most outstanding contemporary designs. It's naturally light, impermeable to liquids, fire retardant, and highly abrasion resistant. When manipulated by skilled craftspeople, cork can be turned into granules of varying sizes or turned into terrazzo-like pieces, adding a sculptural element to the final product.

Similarly, straw, abundant in nature, can be used to create intricately crafted straw marquetry pieces, while rattan can be transformed into karuun, a sustainable alternative to plastic.

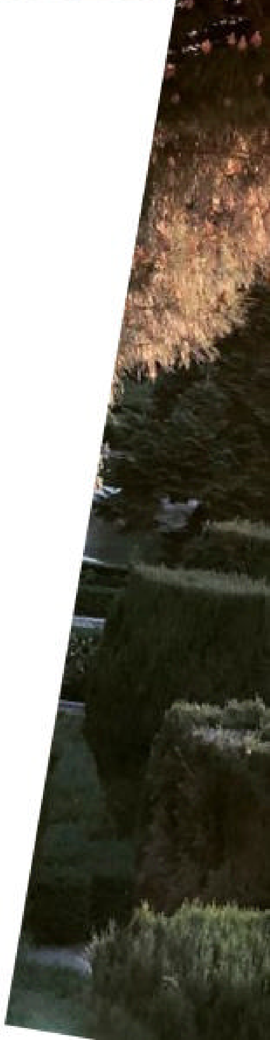
Reviving and preserving ancient skills through modern materials and techniques is crucial for the future of craftsmanship. By changing the perception of craftsmanship and creating supportive working environments, we can turn these skills into fulfilling careers for the next generation. The key to success is innovation and collaboration, as well as embracing sustainable practices and materials. Organisations such as Atelier d'Art de France and QEST are already leading the way in championing craftsmanship, and initiatives such as the Silverlining Academy of Skills are offering opportunities for people to ignite their passion for these timeless techniques.

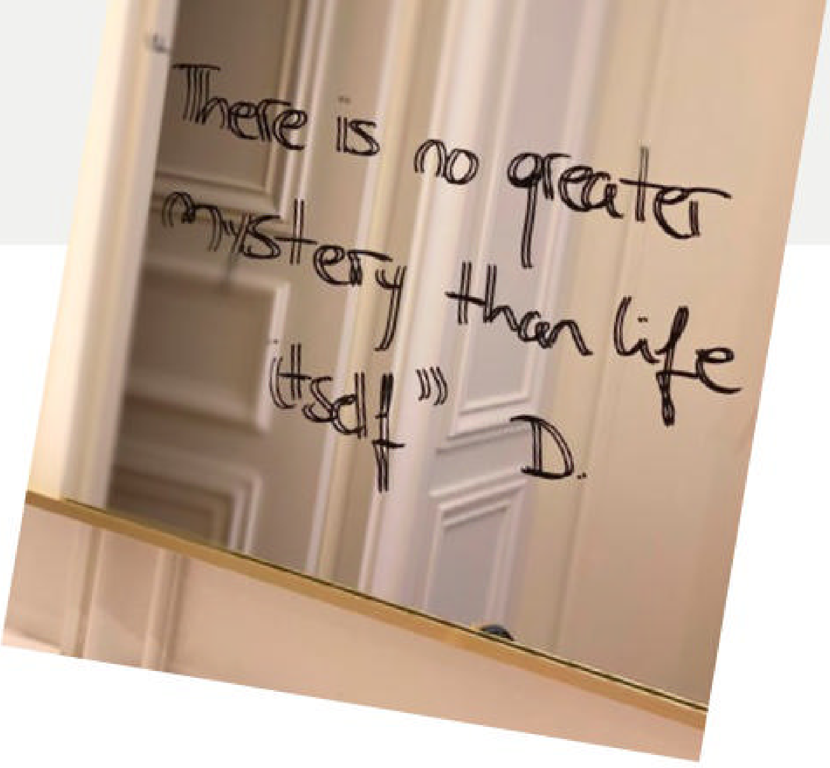
By investing in craftsmanship, we can not only preserve these valuable skills but also contribute to the wider challenge of creating a more sustainable and ethical future.

Mark Boddington is founder of Silverlining, a furniture maker that uses rare and precious materials.



Clockwise from top left: Diego Velázquez's Las Meninas. At the private members' club Matador. The Prado Museum.





The Weekender

Madrid

A culinary stopover in Madrid... sans credit card.

by David Leppan

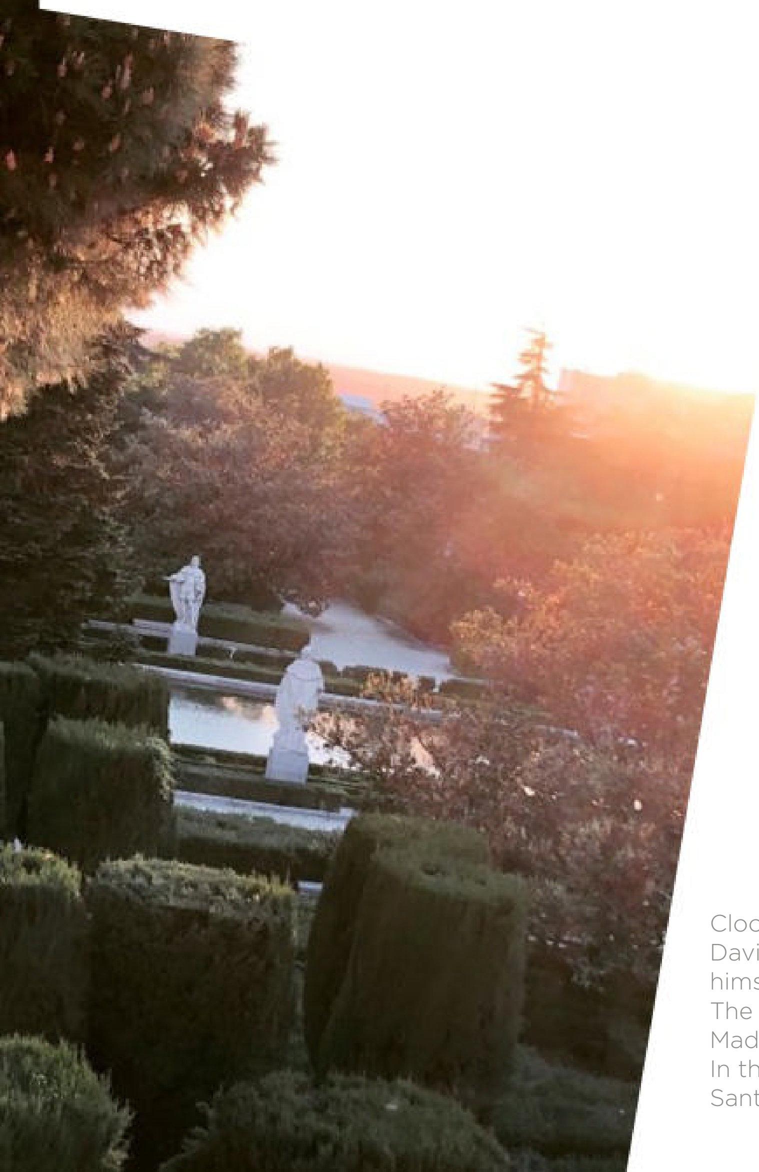
A trip to a magical party recently took me via Madrid. It had been years since I was at The Ritz, a historic five-star Belle Époque hotel on Madrid's Retiro district, next to the Prado Museum. It has been fabulously renovated and is now part of Mandarin Oriental.

I had left my wallet on the plane and the hotel staff jumped into action immediately, paid for my taxi and then followed up with calls to the airline and the airport to try and locate it.

Already impressed at their service and support in a moment like this, I was nonetheless struck by the room-key cards, which are made of cardboard rather than the ghastly plastic that is too much of an industry standard.

My room overlooked the Prado Museum and I guess this will be the closest I ever come to sleeping next to Velázquez's Las Meninas, one of the greatest Old Master treasures.

An almond cake kept me company although not for long — absolutely delicious. And I was equally impressed the nightstand had a wonderful glass bottle rather than the usual toxic plastic bottles most hotels continue to put out.



Clockwise from top left: David Leppan captures himself in a mirror at The Mandarin Oriental, Madrid. Philosophising. In the grounds of hotel Santo Mauro in Madrid.

Having gotten some cash from an ATM (rather cleverly without a card), I went to dinner at Sala de Despiece, a restaurant first introduced to me by a good friend. Helmed by chef-entrepreneur Javier Bonet, this is an upscale tapas bar with an industrial, warehouse vibe. It is designed with the aesthetics of old-school fish and meat-market stalls, and everything on the menu comes down to the best-available produce on the day.

I ordered the artichoke with Baeri Caviar Imperial, the legendary Navarra peeled Tomata (yes, with an a, not an o) with crispy fried basil and the most wonderful eel with foie gras and apple. It definitely kept my mind off quite how I was going to travel without a credit card.

Madrid also boasts a wonderful private members' club: El Matador. Spread across an entire first floor in a grand building in one of the best parts of town, it is a haven to escape into, albeit for just a brief rest.

Charrua Madrid is one of my absolute top restaurants. I love sitting fireside and watching the action in the kitchen but, be warned, it gets pretty warm, which inevitably means copious amounts of Ribera del Duero red wine ends up being consumed.

When not staying at The Ritz, I tend to be at Santo Mauro, which is now operated by Marriott but has to be the gem in its entire portfolio. When booking, try and ensure you get one of the rooms in the main building. The decor is fabulous and slightly over the top, which is what I like in a hotel. I never understand why people want an experience that's 'just like home'. I want something different so that I can walk away and be inspired to do something a little more adventurous in the place I call home.

'En España se vive muy bien.' One of the first sentences I was taught when I arrived in this remarkable country. Viva Espana!

SALA DE DESPIECE
SALA DE

SDD2
SALA DE DESPIECE

Clockwise from top left: Eel with foie gras and apple at Sala de Despiece, Tomata with crispy fried basil. Sala de Despiece exterior. Tea at Santo Mauro. The garden room at the Ritz Mandarin Oriental.

Five Minutes With… Robin Hancock

The co-founders of sustainable seafood brand The Wright Brothers, Robin Hancock and his brother-in-law Ben Wright started off their journey 20 years ago when a stint in France yielded a chance meeting with oyster farmer Jerome. They realised that the British concept of oysters — elitist, only served with expensive Champagne in stuffy restaurants — was ripe for a makeover.

They quit their jobs and bought a historic oyster farm on the Helford River. Today they supply some 500 of the UK's top restaurants and Michelin-starred chefs and have opened three London restaurants, including in Borough Market and Battersea Power Station; while their depot in Brixham, Devon, has become quite a pilgrimage for seafood lovers.

We sat down with Robin Hancock for a quick-fire Q&A about his day-to-day life.

What is your morning routine?
I generally wake at 6:15, have a cup of tea and feed the dogs. Next is my daily Calm meditation followed by affirmations to set me up for the day. It's then either a dog walk by the river or a Peloton before heading off to work.

What is your style signifier?
I am an AllSaints disciple and tend to dress head to foot in that brand.

What is your grooming essential?
I have a sensitive nose and love perfumes: Le Labo Santal 33 or Molecule 01.

What is your wellness mantra?
I never have my phone with me at night and I always fill in my gratitude journal before reading and then a good night's sleep.

What do you always have in your fridge?
Seafood, oysters, in particular — the food of life.

What is your guilty pleasure?
Chocolate and my flight simulator.

Before the coffee gets cold
TOSHIKAZU KAWAGUCHI

From top left: Robin Hancock, one half of The Wright Brothers. Châteauneuf-du-Pape, his favourite red wine. Le Labo Santal 33, one of his preferred scents. Chocolate is a guilty pleasure. Hancock has been reading Before the Coffee Gets Cold by Toshikazu Kawaguchi, as recommended by a book seller. His two dogs. Fresh oysters.

Where do you mainly live and who with?
I live in Kew, West London, with my wife Susie, two of my sons Archie and Harry and our two dogs, Luna and Blue.

What would you save from your house if it was on fire (if pets and family were out already)?
A collection of letters from George Bernard Shaw, left to me by my granny, who was an actress. They are precious. Oh, and my guitar.

On a Sunday what is your favourite thing to do?
We cook a family roast and take the dogs for a walk in Richmond Park. Then we collapse in front of a movie with red wine and chocolate in the snug, where we have an open fire in winter and French doors onto the garden. It's our space to find peace.

If you could go anywhere in the world, where would it be?
Maui in Hawaii. Or the Caribbean. To get away from the British winter.

What is the best advice you have been given and who from?
Endeavour to be the best version of yourself and be true to yourself.

Who would be your perfect dinner-party guests?
Madonna, Nelson Mandela and George Clooney.

What great gift have you received?
For Christmas, my sister gave me a gift called Coffee with a Book Seller at a bookshop in Bath: Topping & Company. I sat with a book seller having previously answered lots of questions about my favourite books and authors, and he suggested a wide range of books to read. It was quite magical. I find great solace from reading.

If you could return to one year of your life, what would it be and why?
That's a hard one. Maybe 1991. I was a recording engineer and recorded Seal's first album. It was a real buzz and so exciting knowing we were making a record that would touch so many hearts.

Is there anything you would like to achieve or do this year?
My biggest challenge is to make our Wright Brothers At Home business a big success and get more of our nation eating the fantastic seafood we land from the oceans that surround our country.

Ultimate Guide to Salone del Mobile

Milan's Salone del Mobile will take place on April 18-23, 2023, returning to its traditional Spring dates for the first time in three years. This 61st edition of the festival is dedicated to the theme *Nothing Happens if Nothing Happens*, inviting designers and studios to start a chain reaction of change to rethink, regenerate and rehabilitate, to come together and go beyond sustainable design thinking.

Billionaire rounds up the must-see stands at this year's fair.

▲ Norwegian Presence
Art gallery Norwegian Presence is back in Brera for Milan Design Week with a roster of inspiring new designs from Norway's most exciting independent makers and creative studios. In a beautiful new venue at Via Pietro Maroncelli 2, styled by Kråkvik & D'Orazio and Bjorn van den Berg, this year's exhibition gives visitors an opportunity to discover innovative new products and gain an insight into Norway's material-minded and collaboration-driven creative culture.
norwegianpresence.no

▲ Bocci
Canadian lighting and design studio Bocci will celebrate the launch of its permanent base in Milan in an early 20th-century building in Zona Vincenzo Monti. For Milan Design Week 2023, a collection of new product designs and bespoke lighting installations will be presented in the intimate residential setting of the space. This includes 118 glass spheres that exhibit traces of the steel cages used in their formation.
bocci.com

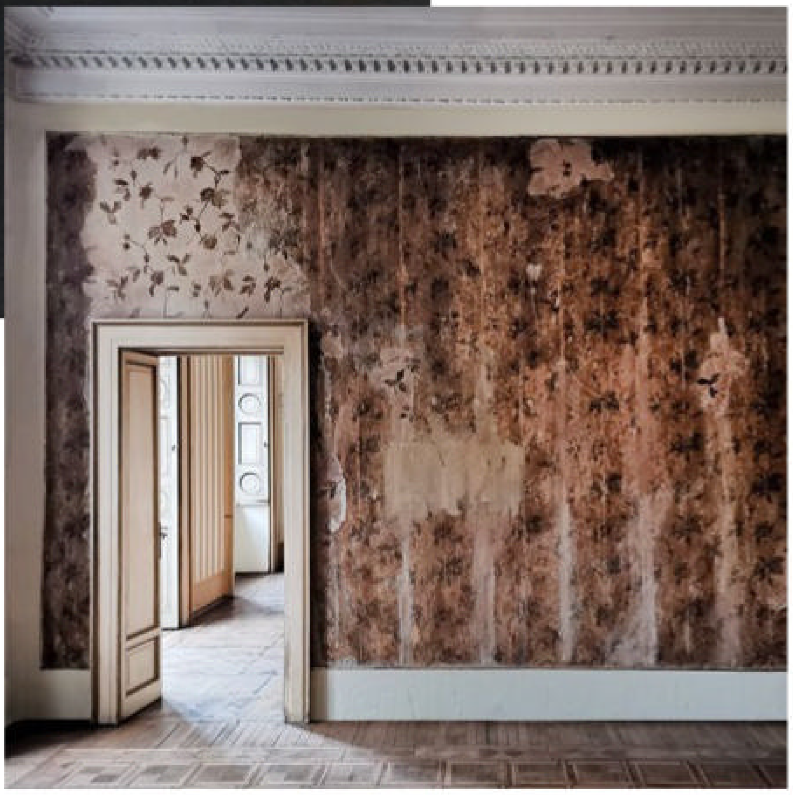
▶ Gubi
Danish design company Gubi will be taking over Milan's most iconic venue, Bagni Misteriosi, to stage an immersive sensory spectacle. Gubi's Salone showcase brings together furniture and lighting and will also mark the official return to production of two of the luminaries of 20th-century lighting design: Italian designer Gianfranco Frattini, and 'the man who illuminated Finland,' Paavo Tynell.
gubi.com

◀ Gebrüder Thonet Vienna

Austrian brand Gebrüder Thonet Vienna returns to Salone del Mobile and renews its collaboration with Iranian-French architect, designer and scenographer India Mahdavi who has designed two new pieces for the brand's booth. There will also be two other new creations in collaboration with Venetian-born designer Luca Nichetto and Hong Kong-based design and architecture practice AB Concept.
gebruederthonetvienna.com

▲ The Beetle Chair/Ten

Originally designed by GamFratesi a decade ago, the Beetle chair continues to inspire design lovers around the world. Curator Marco Sammicheli has invited a team of 10 creatives from around the world to create special-edition pieces that celebrate the design for the Beetle's 10th anniversary. The 10 creatives include fashion designers, product and lighting designers, architects, artists, illustrators and even tattooists, including Arthur Arbesser, Simon Wick, and Rachaporn Choochuey.



◀ Artemest

Luxury interiors company Artemest is creating an apartment for Fuorisalone 2023, Salone's sister event. L'Appartamento, a 1930s Milanese apartment in the historic Cinq Vie will be transformed by six prestigious international interior design and architectural firms: Nina Magon Studio; Anne-Sophie Pailleret; Kingston Lafferty Design; Moniomi Design; Styled Habitat; and T.zed Architects.
artemest.com

OPINIONS

Each issue we ask the same question to three thought-leaders. This time: if you could re-read one book, what would it be and why?

Helen Brocklebank

Emile Zola's 1883 novel *Au Bonheur Des Dames*, translated in English as *The Ladies' Paradise* and set in the 1860s, is a page-turning story of modern consumer culture and its impact on society, customers and the local economy. His dream-machine overloads his customers' senses with enticing, intoxicating displays; he introduces advertising campaigns and home delivery, a tea-room and a reading area for children — the kind of innovation that feels startlingly contemporary. What's more, Mouret has fallen for one of his shop girls, but while his sumptuous store seduces every woman in Paris, Denise herself refuses to succumb to his charms.

A walk around Harrods last week — every bit as opulently pleasurable in 2023 as the Ladies' Paradise Zola described 140 years earlier — reminds me that a re-read of his novel is long overdue. It's not only another opportunity to luxuriate in Zola's delicious prose or consider how cleverly he wraps his critique of capitalism in a hymn to modern business and entrepreneurial spirit, it's also an education in the powerful pull of luxury consumerism.

Helen Brocklebank is chief executive of Walpole, UK sector body for British luxury

Amy Wardell

One of my favourite reads, and into which I joyfully dip time and again, is Peter Ackroyd's stunning *London: The Biography*. It is inimitable in its scope and erudition, taking the reader through the temporal and spatial journey of the evolution of the UK's capital in a way that is personal and utterly memorable.

His detailed stories reveal the city's layers — historical fragments that we rush past daily — and it is wondrous to imagine all the events that have taken place beneath our feet. It is particularly interesting for me as I am involved in reviving some of the city's finest buildings for future use. I am fascinated by the blend of architectures and histories that populate the very fabric of this city and love being a participant — as we all are in our way — in the capital's evolution for future generations.

Fiction for me is escapism, beautiful creative writing that is medicine for the soul. I am often amazed at a writer's ability to lead us into the geographies of their imaginations, helping us to explore new lands and other ways of thinking. Their storytelling helps our minds to wander and give ourselves space for reflection and meditation.

Amy Wardell is head of brand at developer Northacre

Ralph de Wavrin

I would re-read *Principles* by Ray Dalio. In this book, Dalio, who successfully founded Bridgewater Associates from his bedroom, 40 years later went on to being the fifth-biggest private company in the US.

Dalio discusses the need for a key set of principles that you live and die by through all areas of your life. He outlines the principles he used to successfully deal with reality to get what you want out of life.

What this book did for me, was made me focus and really think about my values in life. As I was reading, I would scribble my own personal values and thoughts on the page in pencil as they came to me.

The book has now become almost a bible for me when I am in a situation, in both personal and work life, where I am unsure how to solve a problem. I've learnt when things don't work out, that they are just lessons to improve on.

It's enabled me to be consistent and effective with my decision making, which has been invaluable for the direction of our brand Oliver Bernard Escapes and its early success.

Ralph de Wavrin co-founder of Oliver Bernard Escapes, a luxury travel company

Borgo Santandrea

In 2017, two friends from Ischia acquired Conca's old Grand Hotel Saraceno, built in the 1960s and elegant but semi-derelict. The clifftop views were dreamy, located on the stretch of the Amalfi Coast between Positano and Amalfi, above the centuries-old fishing village of Conca dei Marini, and a long pebble beach bathed in sunlight all day long.

With their vision, the friends meticulously renovated the old hotel into the five-star, 45-room Borgo Santandrea, which opened its doors last year. Attention to detail is second to none, with gorgeous fabrics from wall-to-wall, artisan-made floor tiles and a museum-quality art collection; not to mention three gourmet restaurants.

borgosantandrea.it

TOUCH OF THE HAND

“There are two men inside the artist, the poet and the craftsman. One is born a poet. One becomes a craftsman.” — Emile Zola

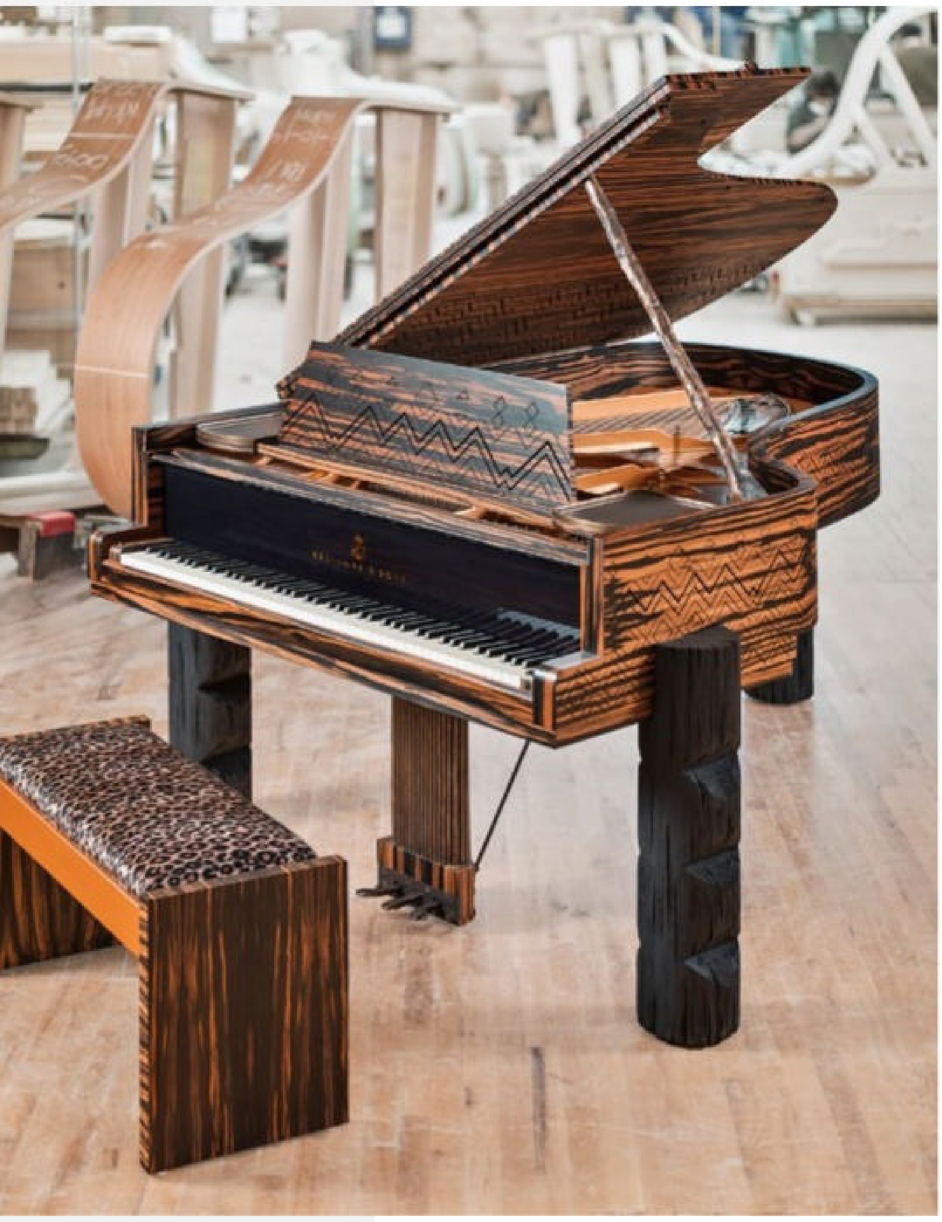
Steinway artisans hand build a Steinway
at its Hamburg factory.

Apps and Arpeggios

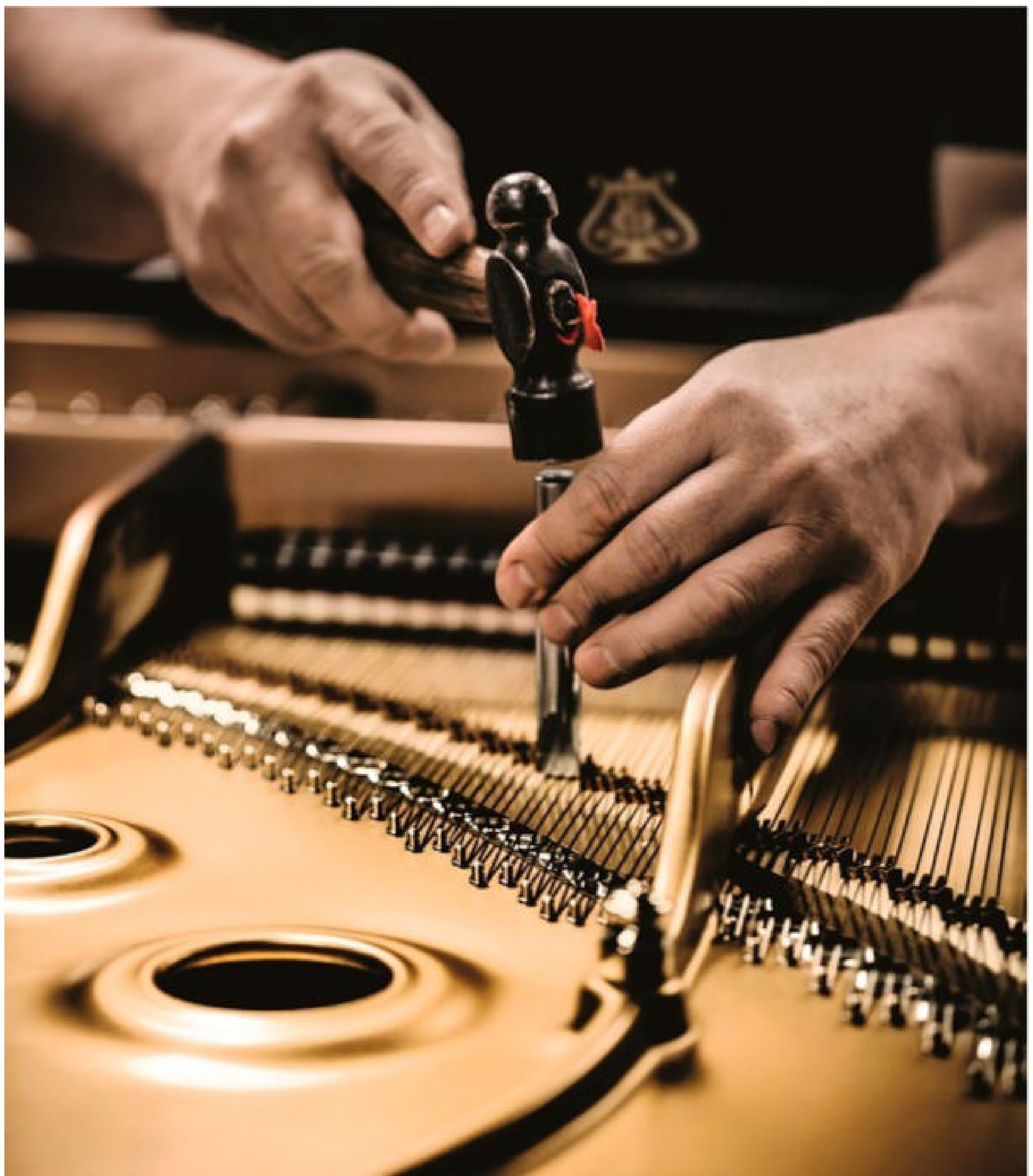
Since 1853 Steinway & Sons has been considered the Rolls-Royce of piano makers; now it is entering a new era of technology.

by Tara Loader Wilkinson

An expectant silence descends within Hamburg's iconic Elbphilharmonie Grand Hall as a single spotlight falls onto the stage, illuminating a grand piano. The innovative vineyard architecture in the concert hall, designed by Swiss architects Herzog & de Meuron, means that every member of the audience is no further than 30m from the stage. The acoustics of this room are second to none; the ethereal 3D-printed 'white skin' walls resembling the myriad of alveoli inside a human lung.



Top: Fine-tuning the piano in the Hamburg factory using an open flame. Middle: Kravitz Grand, a collaboration between Lenny Kravitz and Steinway. Below: Tightening and fine-tuning the string at the Hamburg Factory.



“These are almost all created by workers, not robots. There is soul in the instrument, right from the beginning.” — Eric Feidner.

The stage door opens; the audience takes a collective breath, expecting Chinese virtuoso star pianist Lang Lang, tonight’s billed performer, to enter. No one appears. Is there a mistake? But no, the spotlight makes its way across the stage to the piano, where it settles. Suddenly, a ghostly presence springs to life as the keys of the piano, a Steinway & Sons Spirio| r, starts playing a melody all by itself, with no pianist in sight. A screen above the piano switches on to reveal Lang Lang, indeed playing the piano, but from a studio on the outskirts of the city.

The 40-year-old star (and reported Disney aficionado) is hammering out his own stunning version of ‘We don’t talk about Bruno’ from the film Encanto, remotely, thanks to the new technology of the Steinway Spirio. During the 20-minute interval, Lang Lang makes his way across the city and reappears in the second half, this time to play for the audience in the flesh.

This is the latest technology revealed by Steinway & Sons, the piano-maker established in 1853 by Heinrich Steinweg, which fast became the preferred instrument for Franz Liszt and Richard Wagner and, today, is the choice of many concert pianists, such as Diana Krall, Lang Lang and Billy Joel.

The Spiriocast is a software that allows live, remote, high-resolution performances from one Steinway & Sons Spirio piano, to another, in real time, no matter where in the world they might be. It’s a smart move by the 170-year-old New York-and-Hamburg-based piano maker. For most of its buyers, a piano is more a work of aesthetic perfection to be displayed rather than a musical instrument to be played.

Two thirds of Steinway piano owners do not know how to play the piano, according to Steinway’s chief technology and innovation officer, US-based Eric Feidner, speaking at the Hamburg launch of Spirio. He calls the invention “the most important innovation in piano in 70 years”.

“Until now the company’s focus has been on professional classical pianists. We don’t want to neglect them, but Steinway kind of became set with them,” adds Guido Zimmermann, president of Steinway & Sons Europe, in an interview with Robb Report. “No matter your competency, there’s a

Main: Inside the rim of a Steinway Masterpiece 8x8 piano. Middle: Steinway factory, Hamburg. Below: A Steinway craftswoman.

STEINWAY & SONS
MASTERPIECE
8X8
NO. 1 OF 8
AMERICAN WALNUT

A Steinway & Sons piano takes around 12 years to make and around 12,000 parts to assemble, 80 percent of which is done by hand.

Imagine hosting a dinner party and tuning into a live concert played by a superstar pianist on the other side of the world.

real joy in playing a Steinway." Lang Lang could attest to this; in fact, Steinway is such an important part of his life, he invited Zimmerman to his wedding.

For those non-players who can afford the US$200,000-plus price tag for a musical instrument that they can't play, it could be a game-changer. Imagine hosting a dinner party at home and tuning into a live concert played by a superstar pianist on the other side of the world, your Steinway Spirio magically recreating every note, to the delight of your guests. Or, you can access an ever-growing music library with a swipe and a tap of your Steinway iPad, (which comes with each piano) to hear the work of artists such as Bach, Beethoven, Duke Ellington, Glenn Gould, Arthur Rubinstein, and Art Tatum.

The technology works like this: the sensor system captures the movements of the piano's hammers and pedalling, and the Spiriocast software transfers the high-resolution data to recreate an identical, perfectly in-sync, unfiltered audio, video and acoustical experience on however many connected pianos receiving the cast. Video and audio of a performer is captured by the iPad and is broadcast over the internet in synchronisation with the music data.

As a Spiriocast host, one can invite listeners to a broadcast from the Spirio app on the iPad. Once the host goes live, video and audio from the iPad will be transmitted to the listener's iPad, or any connected device, such as an external monitor. When the host plays, the 'listening' Spirios perform along in real time, wherever they might be based.

The boom in taking up playing piano in China also bodes well for Spirio, which for Steinway is now the fastest-growing market (the US is still the largest, followed by Europe).

Feidner says buyers have always loved the story of Steinway and its emphasis on craftsmanship; a Steinway & Sons piano takes around 12 years to make and around 12,000 parts to assemble, 80 percent of which is done by hand; the other fifth of the procedures are done by machines. More than 200 craftspeople are involved in the process. Unsurprisingly Steinway's production is quite limited, at around 1,400 a year.

"These are almost all created by workers, not robots," says Feidner. "There is soul in the instrument, right from the beginning." ◇

STEINWAY & SONS

Steinway artist Lang Lang.

Drinking Set no. 267, 'Moire' by Bodo Sperlein for Lobmeyr © Fabian Frinzel

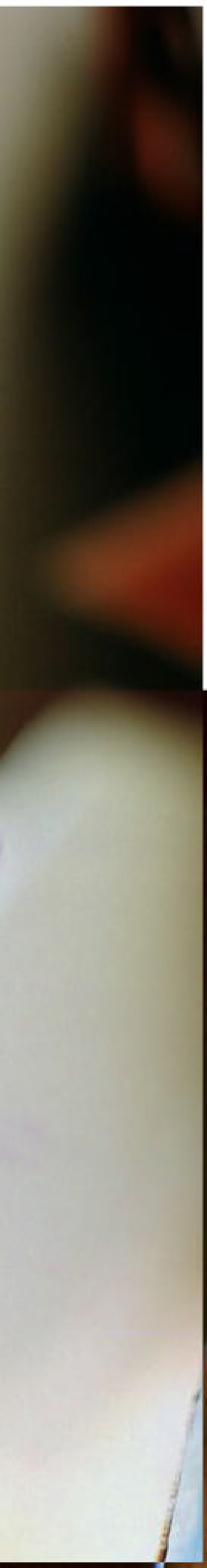
Raise Your Glass

Turning 200 years in 2023, an Austrian glass manufacturer that is undeniably modern and ahead of its time.

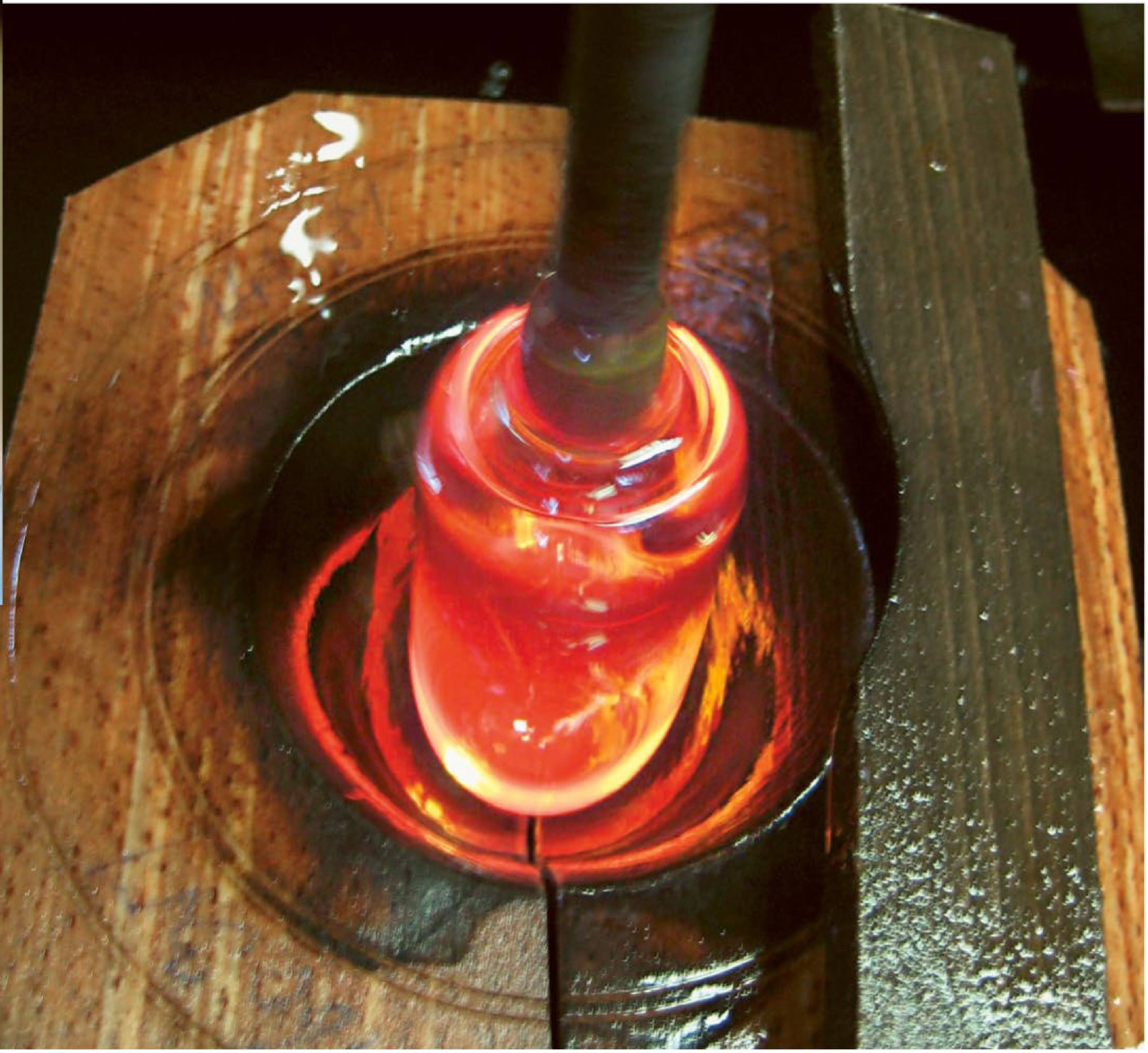
by Clara Le Fort

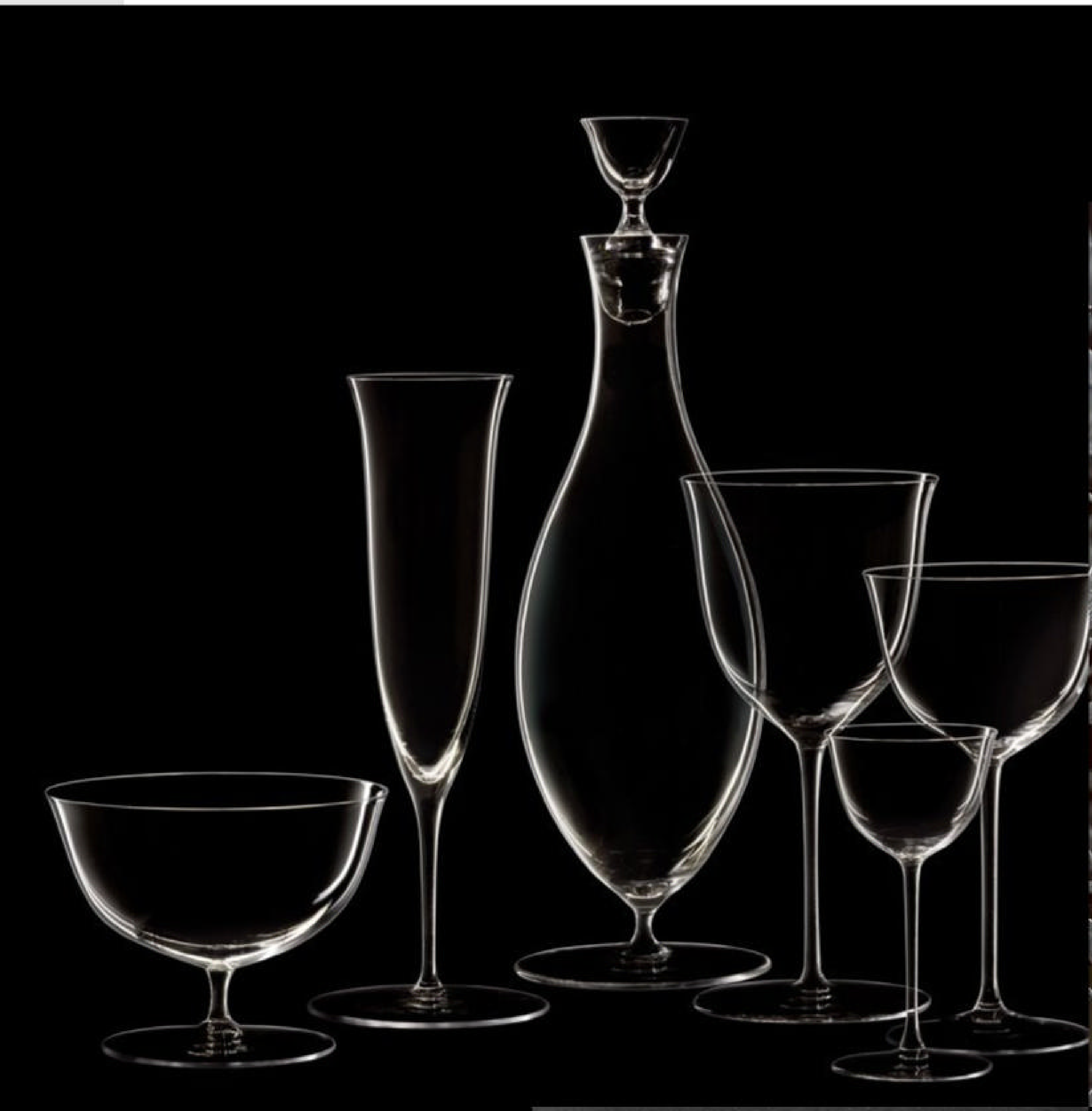
“It’s difficult to tell a product that is 100 years old from a recently designed piece,” says Leonid Rath, owner of Austrian glass-manufacturer Lobmeyr, inside its Vienna flagship. Turning 200 years in 2023, Lobmeyr is undeniably modern and ahead of its time. “Lobmeyr is familiar to me, I grew up with it, heading to the workshops with my father, who shared everything with me and made sure there was a historical continuum. But reading Ludwig Lobmeyr’s biography was the real eye-opener,” adds Rath. “He was so passionate, ahead of his time, curious and relentless about being open-minded. He grounded the business in a basic yet fundamental approach to quality. He brought the brand to what it is today.”

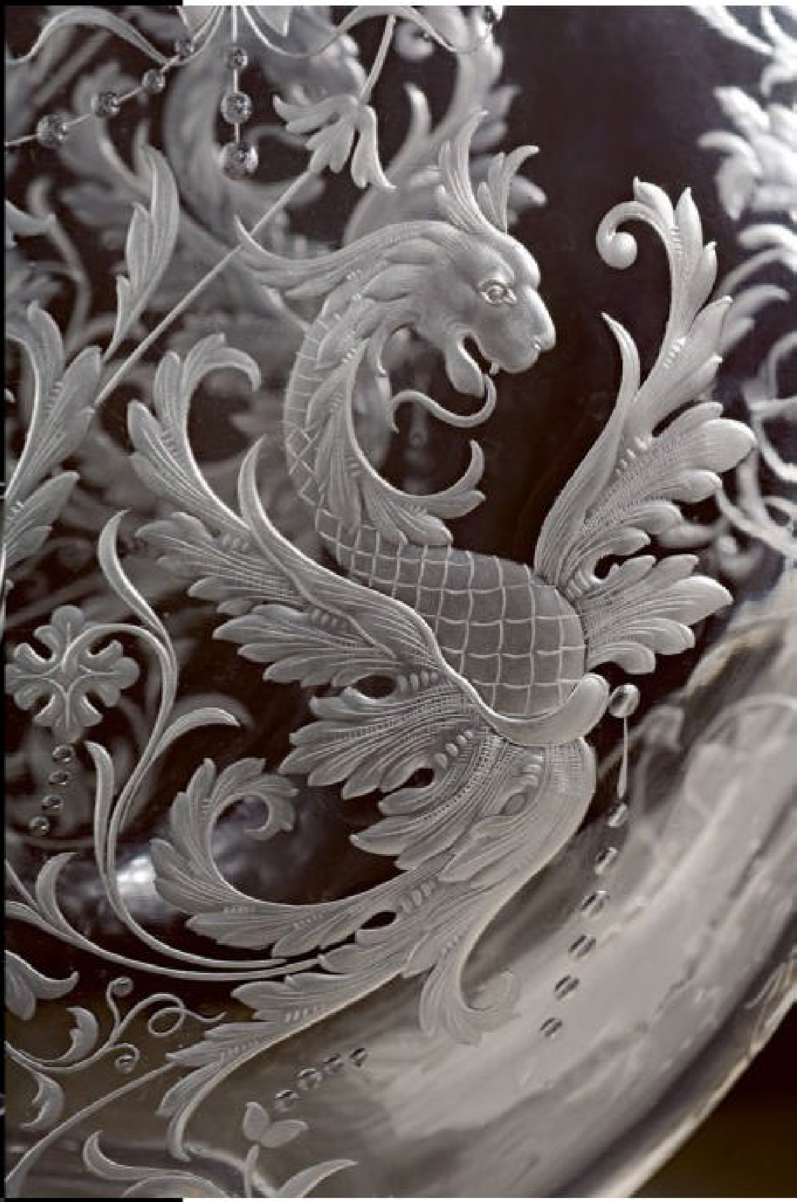
Left and right: expert craftsmen work in the brand's atelier in Vienna. Below: Leonid, Johannes and Andreas Rath in front of the Vienna flagship store.

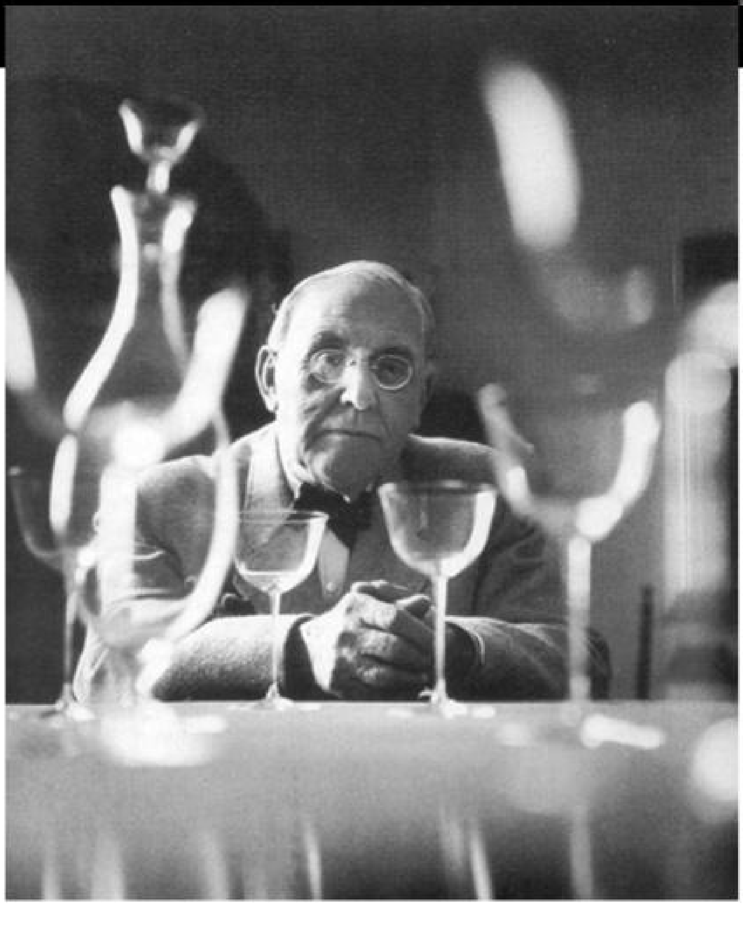


"It's difficult to tell a product that is 100 years old from a recently designed piece." — Leonid Rath.









Clockwise from top:
First designed by Josef Hoffmann in 1912, the Serie B drinking set was later executed in matt glass with black enamel broncit decoration. It soon became one of the symbols of the Wiener Werkstätte. Detail of a 19th century engraving. Josef Hoffmann poses amid drinking set No.238, called the Patrician, in 1917.

Whatever century it sits in, Lobmeyr manages to remain altogether timeless and in tune with the main creative spirits of its era.

More than a century later, Rath's parents took a counterintuitive yet sound business decision. As companies turned more and more to Asia to find efficient production systems, invest in marketing and expand, Lobmeyr decided to stay small and beautiful, and kept fighting for quality over profit. Today, this strategy still pays. Exceptional pieces are still crafted in direct continuity with the past. Lobmeyr plans to open a new cutting and engraving workshop in Vienna in the spring, thus doubling its capacity to produce unique pieces in the city.

"It's wonderful to open the eyes of the designers, to offer them possibilities they never thought existed; they can challenge the dexterity of the craftsman, which industrial design doesn't allow. They are not faced with a computer-designed object that is then engineered. At Lobmeyr, objects and ideas are brought to life through the hand of the maker," says Rath. Spearheading countless developments, he has worked with many contemporary talents, designers, graphic designers and artists, to create pieces that stand out. He adds that "customers love to feel the hand behind the material".

German designer Mark Braun, for example, created the Reichtum (wealth) collection of water carafes on which Austrian lakes, rivers and glaciers are outlined and engraved. For isn't water the most essential wealth of everyday life, the designer asks? Other collaborations with Ilse Crawford, Murray Moss and Aldo Bakker unveil the same glass designed with a different thickness, which changes the whole perception, weight and way of drinking.

Today, designers still look back at Lobmeyr's legacy. In 1931, Austrian architect Adolf Loos imagined a set of drinking glasses with geometrical patterns. Later he asked Lobmeyr to replace the original patterns with "butterflies, small animals, and the nude human form". For the 80th anniversary of the legendary Loos No. 248 bar set, designer Stefan Sagmeister has completed Loos' wish. Sagmeister painted the seven deadly sins and the seven heavenly virtues on the bottom of the Loos glasses. This year, to celebrate another anniversary, Swiss artist Nives Widauer reinterprets a traditional coat of arms on Renaissance goblets using body parts to represent seven great human qualities such as curiosity, respect and courage.

And the story goes on. Whatever century it sits in, Lobmeyr manages to remain altogether timeless and in tune with the main creative spirits of its era. ◇

www.lobmeyr.at

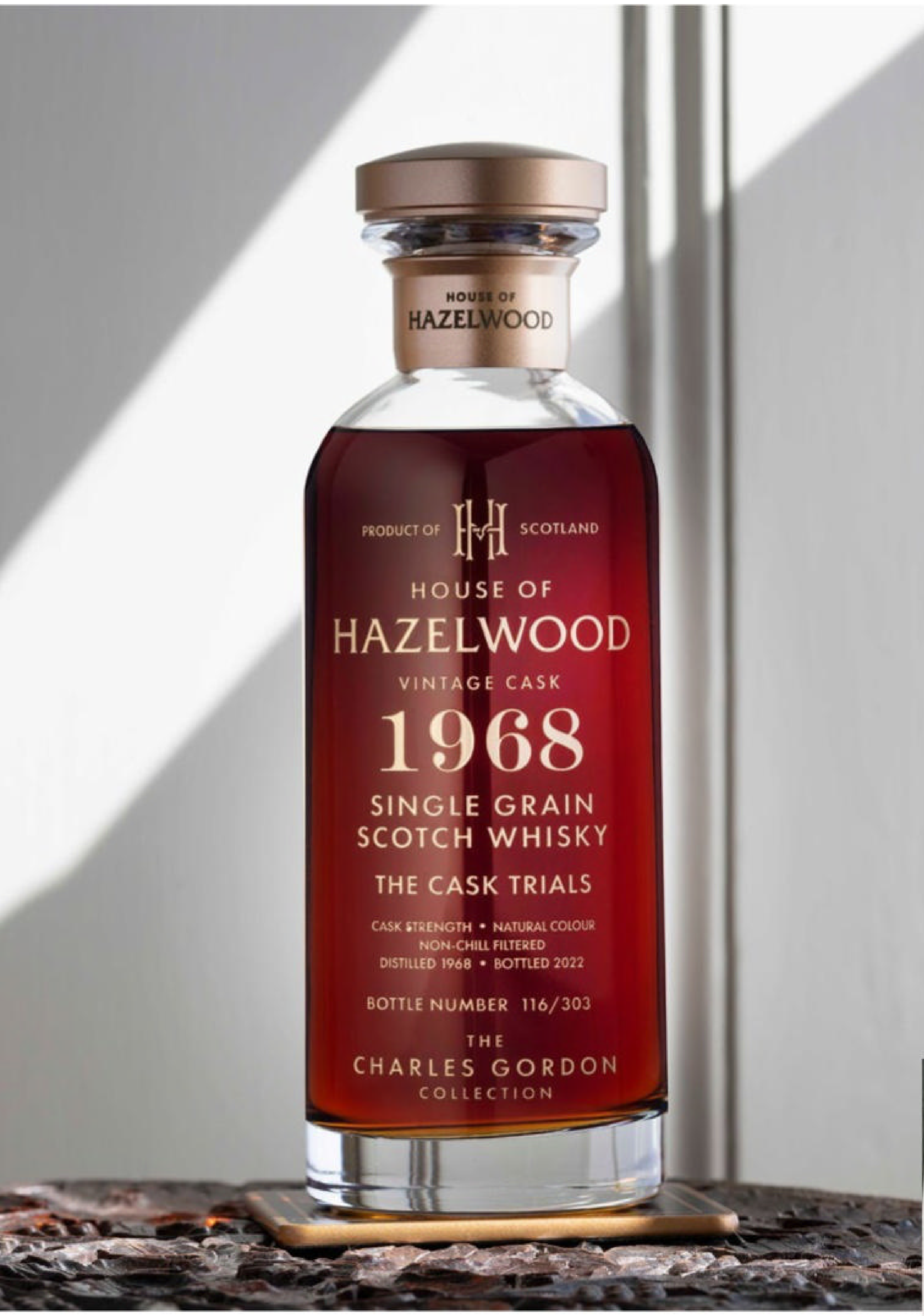
In the
Hazelwood
warehouse,
moving a cask.

Steeped in History

A legendary Scotch whisky family releases a once-private collection spanning seven decades.

by Daniel Nash

On Christmas Day in 1887, William Grant, with his nine children, opened the eponymous whisky maker William Grant & Sons, manufacturer of Glenfiddich and Balvenie. Today it is the largest Scotch whisky distiller still 100 percent in family ownership. Known for being the first in the world to market single-malt whisky, the business is now run by subsequent generations of the Grant and Gordon families.


HOUSE OF
HAZELWOOD
PRODUCT OF SCOTLAND
HOUSE OF
HAZELWOOD
VINTAGE CASK
1968
SINGLE GRAIN
SCOTCH WHISKY
THE CASK TRIALS
CASK STRENGTH • NATURAL COLOUR
NON-CHILL FILTERED
DISTILLED 1968 • BOTTLED 2022
BOTTLE NUMBER 116/303
THE
CHARLES GORDON
COLLECTION

The Cask Trials whisky, 1968. Below: William Grant Gordon pictured with a young Charles Gordon.

> *"In the first sampling, we had 140 different casks to try. It was probably one of the best days of my life." — Kirsten Grant Meikle.*

House of Hazelwood is the private family collection of whisky named after the Grant/Gordon family home Hazelwood House in Dufftown, Scotland. Still used by the family today, this was the lifetime residence of luminary Janet Sheed Roberts (The Wee Janie), who died in 2012 at the age of 110.

Family bonds run deep. Fifth generation-family member Kirsten Grant Meikle, is today spearheading the launch of a Scotch whisky range called House of Hazelwood, which comes from the Grant/Gordon family's private stocks, some as old as 70 years. Squirrelled away for special occasions for so many years, "we've been keeping it for a rainy day", Grant Meikle says over a Zoom call.

Working on the House of Hazelwood whiskies was an amazing experience, says Grant Meikle. "In the first sampling, we had 140 different casks to try. It was probably one of the best days of my life. Nothing disappointed us," she says.

Different whiskies are set to be released by House of Hazelwood every six months, spanning every corner of Scotland, from the Girvan grain distillery on the South Ayrshire coast, to the last drops distilled at some of Scotland's now-silent distilleries.

So far, two eight-bottle limited-edition collections have been released: The Charles Gordon Collection and The Legacy Collection, first in Spring and then in Autumn of 2022.

With such a diverse inventory, the plan is to continue releasing rare and unique whiskies for quite some time, says Grant Meikle, adding that each one will be different, none will ever be repeated. They also offer a whisky concierge service to complete private projects by commission.

> *"We have the freedom to sit on stock for several years, to experiment, and the profile of whisky changes over time the longer you leave it."*
> *— Kirsten Grant Meikle.*

Fine whisky runs in her blood, but Grant Meikle learned her trade and worked alongside the late Charles Grant Gordon (1927-2013), who was her uncle and who spent every holiday with his Aunt Janie at Hazelwood House. It was Charles who insisted Kirsten join the business. A "complete maverick", he was not an easy man to say no to, she recalls.

"He used to say to me, we don't sell whisky, we sell dreams. It's as much about the liquid as it is about the heritage of the brand, of which we have lots of," she says. Charles always emphasised the importance of patience and independence, she adds. "You need to be thinking long term in this business, he used to say. We're not a publicly listed company; we answer to ourselves; that allows us the freedom to sit on stock for several years, to experiment, and the profile of whisky changes over time the longer you leave it."

House of Hazelwood and the Charles Gordon Collection is uniquely tied to Charles's entrepreneurial vision. In the 1960s, William Grant & Sons didn't own a grain distillery, which meant it was reliant on purchasing grain from competitors.

After a quarrel about television advertising between William Grant & Sons and Distillers Company Limited (which would later become Diageo), Charles decided the company needed to build its own grain distillery. "My uncle found an abandoned chemical plant in Girvan, South Ayrshire, close to the water and, within nine months, it was producing alcohol," she recalls.

Today it is making some 130 million litres of alcohol per year. "That gave us the independence to not have to rely on getting grain from other companies, and then we were in a position to trade casks with other companies to blend. And the rest, so they say, is history."

House of Hazelwood is split across a range of four Charles Gordon Collection releases (£3,000/70cl) and four Legacy Collection releases (£950-£1,500). The whiskies are available online from www.houseofhazelwood.com, as well as through retailers, including Harrods; Hedonism Wines; Royal Mile Whiskies; Davidoff of London; and The Whisky Shop. ◇

From top: Cooper inspecting one of the whisky cask hoops he has repaired. Close-up of a valinch being used to extract whisky straight from a House of Hazelwood cask. Kirsten Grant Meikle.

Head Start

The inside story from a Danish hat-making renaissance.

by Daniel Nash

On the Danish island of Zealand, in the historic town of Sorø, a hat-making resurgence is underway, led by a self-taught hatmaker and his wife. Eight years ago, Peter and Cathrine Hornskov opened their eponymous business Hornskov, one of only a handful of custom hatters in Denmark. It started when Peter, who was studying product development, chanced to see a video on hat-making. “I had an epiphany,” he says. Although he loved wearing hats, he had always struggled to find ones that fitted, due to his “long oval head”, he laughs. At the very least, he thought, he could make a few hats for himself.

Peter Hornskov working on a hat.

Top: After the felt hat is pounced, which means to sand and smooth the finish, it is set on fire to clean up any excess fibres. Steaming the hat helps to remove any wrinkles. A finished Hornskov hat, complete with Hoopoe feather cluster.

> *"I would work my way backwards; it was a trial-and-error reverse engineering at a crafts level." — Peter Hornskov.*

Six months of research included taking apart vintage hats and reassembling them, uncovering old techniques and discovering methods of recreating the hats. "I would work my way backwards; it was a trial-and-error reverse engineering at a crafts level." With a few basic materials and makeshift tools, he cobbled together some prototypes. They were "crude and functional, just a piece of felt pulled over a block, with a leather inner and a few stitches", but nonetheless proud of them, he posted them to his Instagram feed.

After a few hours, the post had gone viral and several strangers had commissioned hats. He created a crowdfunding page and within 30 days had raised the equivalent of around £6,000, plenty to buy the necessary materials and kit to set up the business. Today, Hornskov has a production line of approximately 1,000 hats annually, shipped to 60 different countries, all hand-crafted by Peter and Cathrine in their workshop in Sorø. They have a small appointment-only showroom on the island of Christianshavn in the heart of Copenhagen, but otherwise sales are made online or through word of mouth.

"I don't consider myself an artist or an artisan, I'm just a craftsman, following a recipe," says Peter, dialling in from their Sorø workshop, Cathrine busy prepping tools in the background. Their daughter and son, aged six and four, are being looked after by Cathrine's parents. "Our hats are all bespoke, so are very much a result of the client's vision," he says. The sky is almost the limit when it comes to hat design,

From top: Peter in the workshop. The small appointment-only showroom on the island of Christianshavn. Peter and Cathrine in the workshop.

“Denmark once had a hatter in every small town and even a school for hat making. Now, most custom hatters you see are of a new generation.” — Peter Hornskov.

but there are certain things that can’t be done. Recently, a client asked for a vintage safari replica hat that included a piece of zebra skin. “Even if we could source it, we couldn’t get it through US customs.” (Around half of their hats are currently ordered by US-based customers.)

Hornskov hats are all made to order, with prices ranging from around £140 for the 100 percent tweed caps to between £400-£500 for felt hats. Hornskov uses beaver and hare felt from animals culled by farmers in Canada and Argentina. He believes it is more sustainable than using materials other hatters use, such as wool, from farmed sheep, or rabbit fur, from caged rabbits. “We go to great lengths to ensure sustainability.”

Peter sees his business as a return to Denmark’s old hat-making tradition. “Denmark once had a hatter in every small town and even a school for hat making. It was just never at an industrial level, which is why, when hats went out of fashion in the 1960s, all of the remaining hat makers went out of business and just disappeared.

“That was pretty much the same all over the world,” he continues, “with the exception of perhaps a few shops in London and some small cowboy hat shops in the US. Other than that, most custom hatters you see today are of a new generation that started in the early 2010s.”

What sets Hornskov apart from competitors? “The fit,” says Peter without hesitation. All customers receive a free-to-order measuring kit then can book a virtual fitting session with Peter over Zoom. Twenty-five percent of their orders are from repeat customers.

The objective is to scale up, ultimately having a store in every major city. “We want to be the company that everyone thinks of when they think of hats,” says Peter, adding “we want to be this century’s Borsalino or Stetson. Although better.” They are on the lookout for an investor — albeit a hands-off one, he adds. “We have to stay in charge, our detail-oriented identity is important.”

Peter believes that the key to his success lies in making hats that are high-quality but well-priced, and treating each client with the greatest respect. “We take our clients on a personal journey.” He also believes in humility. “Even though I call myself a master hatter and achieved my 10,000 hours in the trade a long time ago, I still learn every day.” ◇

TIME AND SPACE

“To see a world in a grain of sand
And a heaven in a wild flower
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour.”
— William Blake

Breguet
09 - 2187 - 46444

Breguet
manufacture
Rotor Classique
5317-7919.

Perfect Timing

In conversation with Lionel a Marca, the chief executive of watch manufacturer Breguet.

by Daniel Nash

How has Lionel a Marca's first 18 months as chief executive of one of the world's most historic watchmakers been? "Complicated," he laughs, a suitable answer for the brand that marked the invention of the greatest watchmaking complication in history: The Tourbillon, a mechanism that aims to compensate the effect of the gravity on the watch.

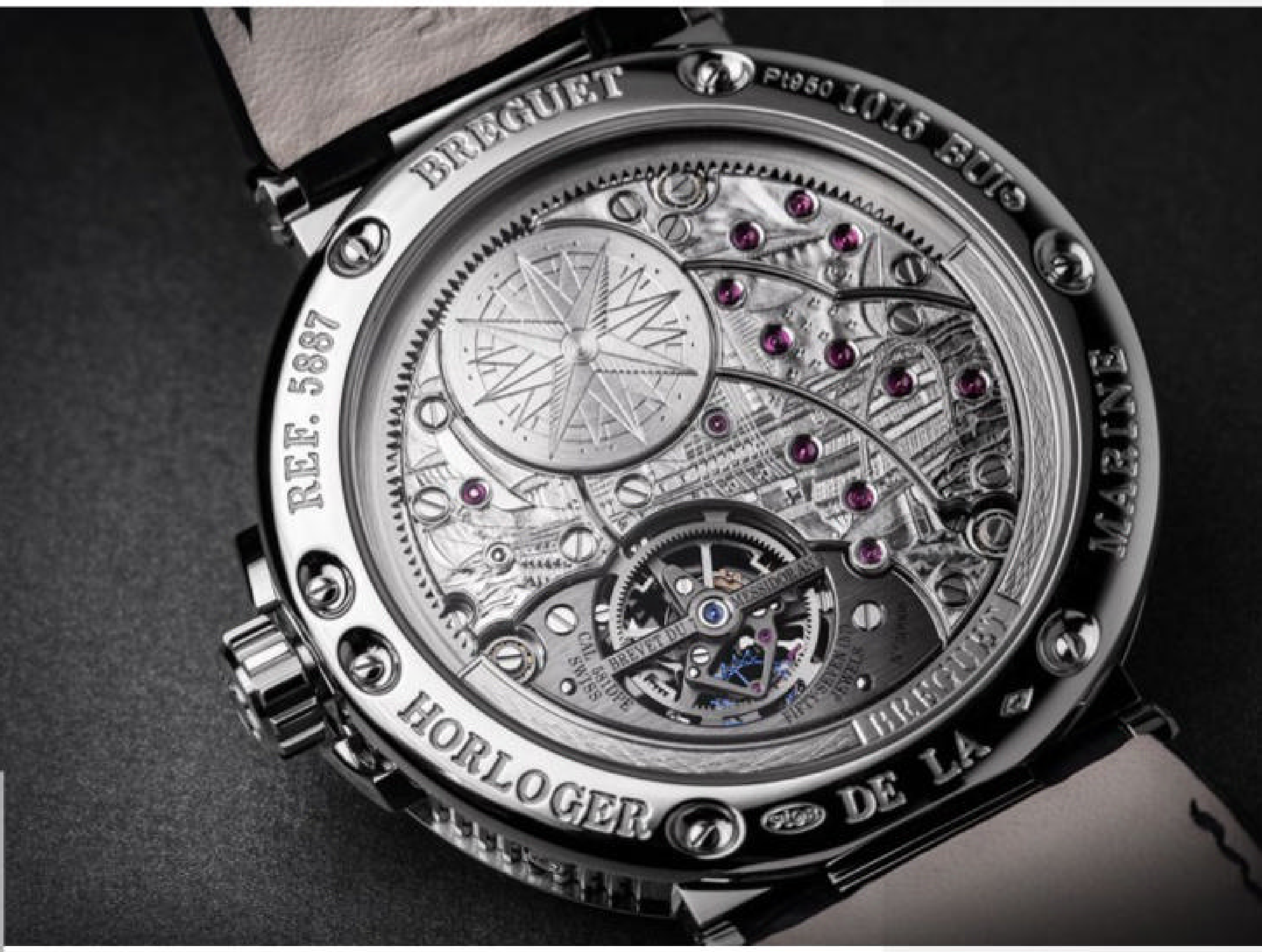
“The fact that I am a watchmaker by training and, at heart, means I can contribute usefully about the watches and their design and aesthetics.” — Lionel a Marca.

Lionel a Marca comes from a background of watchmaking, as well as 30 years spent at The Swatch Group. Born in the watchmaking cradle of Porrentruy, Switzerland, after graduating from watchmaking school and a few years of experience, he joined The Swatch Group, more precisely Frédéric Piguet in 1992. He was initially tuning movements before moving on to managing teams. Lionel a Marca spent over 20 years at luxury diving watchmaker Blancpain in charge of product and operations.

He speaks to *Billionaire* about his experiences as CEO of Breguet in Frieze London, where he came to celebrate Breguet’s global partnership with Frieze Art Fair.

How has your first 18 months been?
It has been complicated, in a good way; enriching. Breguet has an extraordinary history as a manufacturer. At Breguet, the team is involved in fundamental research and development into precision watch making. Taking into account that Breguet was a genius who invented many complications; our task is to adapt those inventions to the modern day and build tomorrow’s watchmaking.

What are the main challenges at Breguet?
It’s a little early to predict what mark I am going to leave on Breguet, but what I can say is there is room for improvement in certain areas and my responsibility is to continue developing the brand. Within our brand, there are many projects in development. My role is to be the conductor of the brand in order to harmonise everything. I have to synchronise the start of projects in accordance with the strategic launch dates of each on the market. Not just doing research and development in a silo; rather, marrying the commercial side with the development side from the start. Teamwork is the key; various departments have been working too much in a siloed fashion, people were afraid to ask questions outside of their departments, but those questions are exactly what allows you to move forward and progress. I would like teams to have better communication across the company. The fact that I am a watchmaker by training and, at heart, means I can contribute usefully about the watches and their design and aesthetics to the various departments.


BREGUET
Pt950 1015 BU
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MARINE
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BREGUET

From Top: The Marine Équation Marchante 5887, one of the most complicated watches in Breguet's Marine collection. Lionel a Marca. Guilloche decoration at the Breguet manufacture, a precise engraving technique.

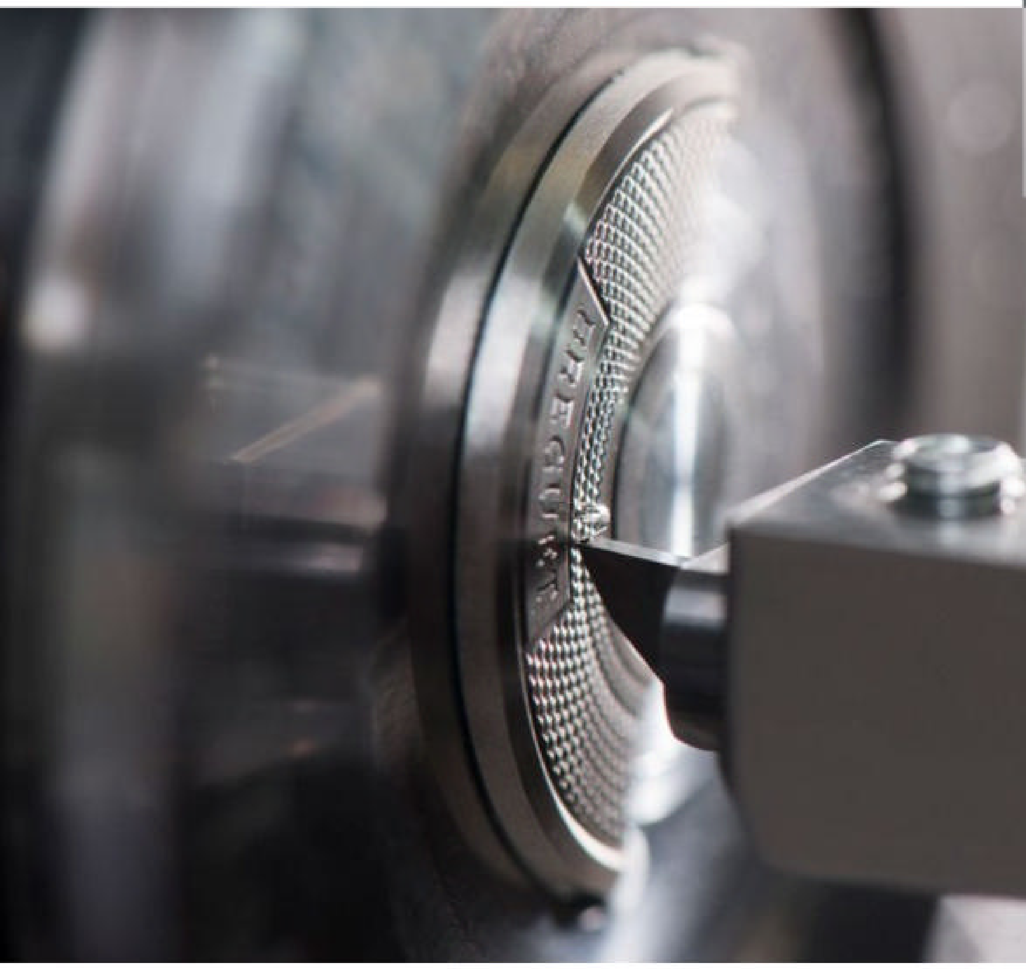
Left: A Breguet Fusée Tourbillon Tradition. Right: Anglage, a technique also known as chamfering, that watchmakers use to make sharp right angles on the edge of a workpiece.

> *“There are three things that are important in watchmaking: the product, the product, and the product.” — Nicolas G Hayek, founder of The Swatch Group.*

Can you talk about your products at Breguet?
We have six fantastic collections at Breguet: Tradition, Classique, Marine, Reine de Naples, Héritage and Type XX. We are not looking to launch a new collection, although we will launch new models within the collections. Each collection has to tell its own story; the history is extremely rich, and that is what I am going to draw on. The late Nicolas G. Hayek [founder of The Swatch Group] used to say to me, “there are three things that are important in watchmaking: the product, the product, and the product”. When I go to the different teams, we talk about the products and how to improve them.

Which collection most reflects the founder’s vision?
As a watchmaker, I believe it is the Classique: Breguet hands, off-centred dials, guillochage: this collection reflects the unique signatures of the House. I also love the Tradition collection, being able to see the movement and mechanism. I am currently wearing a titanium watch from the Marine collection: a more sporty, light timepiece perfect for everyday wear, which is taking more and more prominence within our collections.

Why does your clientele buy Breguet?
We have gained a following of young clients in Asia recently who are very interested in our history. For example, those I met in Tokyo, Seoul and Singapore recently were asking who Abraham-Louis Breguet was, what did he do and what did he discover, making the connection between the watch on their wrist and the man who changed the course of horology. For the last four to five years our biggest market has been China, while Korea shows the strongest growth, then Japan, the US and Europe, and we’re hopeful for more growth in the UK. King George V used to wear a Breguet; some very important watches created by Abraham-Louis Breguet are still owned by the Royal Family. ◇



Top: The oscillating weight on the back of a Breguet Marine Tourbillon Equation Marchante. Carving the oscillating weight at the guilloche atelier. A watchmaker at the Breguet Manufacture in the Guillochage Atelier.

The Colonnade at Le Bristol Paris
© Eric Deniset

Parisian Icon

Le Bristol hotel is a bastion of excellence
and a temple of gastronomy.

by Lisa Young

The address says it all. Located on Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré in Paris's fashionable 8th arrondissement, the desirable and opulent old-school chic hotel Le Bristol is a Parisian icon. Like the sophisticated designer boutiques surrounding it, Le Bristol retains its classy and classic style, decorated throughout with fine French regalia. From the moment the highly groomed and dedicated doormen open the front doors (that first opened back in 1925), there's a sense of luxury. Le Bristol is part of the Oetker Collection of hotels.

Top: Le Bristol Paris garden. Below: The deluxe suite © Claire Cocano

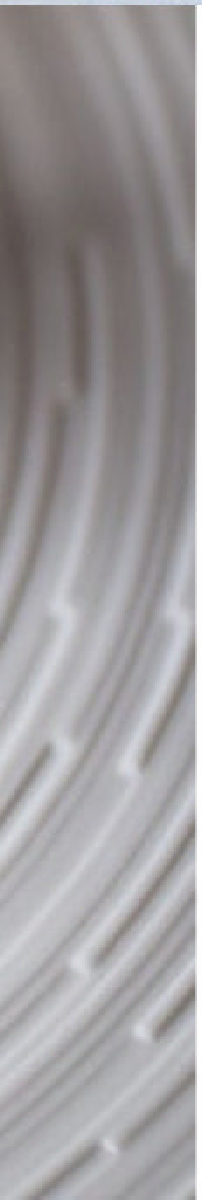
The pretty courtyard garden was designed by Lady Arabella Lennox- Boyd and has become the perfect spot to enjoy lunch, a glass of wine or the famous afternoon tea.

Huge floral displays and 17th-century antiques fill the grand foyer, along with sparkling crystal chandeliers that hang from the high ceilings. The foyer is where the hotel's resident Birman cat named Socrate can be found; his manicured paws glide across the smooth marble floor to be pampered by arriving guests. This fabulous feline fluff-ball is a well-loved permanent resident of Le Bristol and pet owners will be pleased to hear that four-legged guests are welcome at the hotel.

Whether staying in the original Matignon wing or the newer Residence wing, each of the hotel's 190 intimate rooms and suites vary in shape and size, from the 40-square-metre rooms to the 320-square-metre Imperial Suite; all are beautifully furnished in the style of Louis Quinze and Louis Seize with plenty of light streaming through the heavily draped windows. The rooms are not modern in style but extremely comfortable, with floral patterns, silk and velvet textiles, cosy king-sized beds, antique furniture, old-style writing desks, deep-pile carpets and traditional heavy curtains. The large white Carrara-marbled bathrooms feature heated floors, rainfall showers and deep built-in baths.

At the heart of the hotel is Le Jardin Français: a hidden treasure and an oasis of flowers lined by plush drawing rooms and a colonnade filled with scented orange trees.

The pretty courtyard garden was designed by Lady Arabella Lennox-Boyd and has become the perfect spot to enjoy lunch, a glass of wine or the famous gourmet afternoon tea abundant with the latest delights — both savoury and sweet. Alternatively, afternoon tea and cake can be enjoyed at Café Antonia under the gaze of Marie-Antoinette ("let them eat cake").



Left: The Pavlova au citron corse © Pascal Hainigue/ Ilya Kagan. Right: A deluxe suite and the bathroom in the royal suite both © Claire Cocano.

The foyer is where the hotel's resident Birman cat named Socrate can be found; pet owners will be pleased to hear that four-legged guests are welcome at the hotel.

Everything growing in the garden has been chosen with care to support the biodiversity of this precious Parisian oasis. To maintain the garden's abundance, Le Bristol has vowed to use only plant-based and biodegradable products.

Le Bristol Paris is home to four Michelin stars: it is a bastion of gourmet excellence and a temple of gastronomy that is absolutely French. At Le Bristol's Epicure restaurant triple-Michelin-starred executive chef Eric Frechon prepares exquisite dishes, including caviar from Sologne; Candele macaroni; and Bresse farm hen poached in a bladder. Meals can be paired with wines handpicked by the restaurant's master sommelier, Bernard Neveu. Reservations are required for Epicure. Equally appealing is Le Jardin Francaise, Frechon's beautiful al fresco restaurant. Frechon has acquired four Michelin stars for Le Bristol Paris: three belong to Epicure, and the other to 114 Faubourg, located on the other side of the hotel's grand foyer.

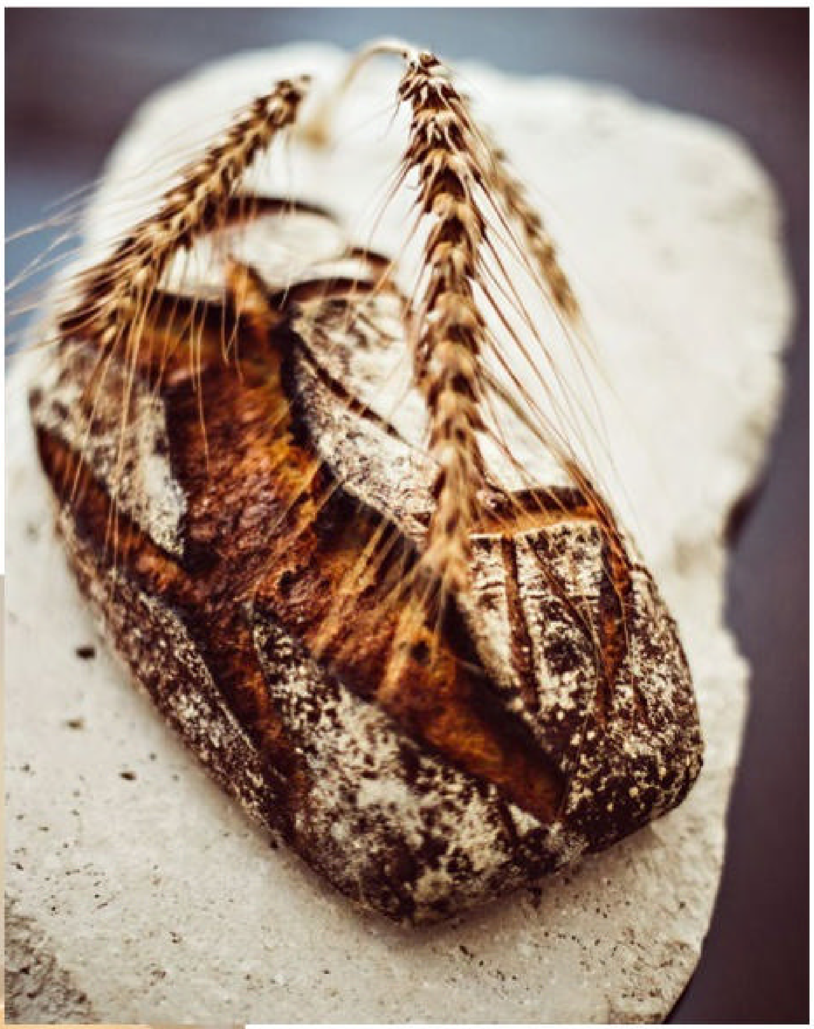
Filled with sunlight, Spa Le Bristol by La Prairie uses products by Tata Harper and Bonpoint. There's a wide range of treatments on offer, including luxurious personalised massages and a fun indoor rooftop pool decorated in the style of an old wooden ocean liner with huge windows offering spectacular views of the Sacré-Coeur.

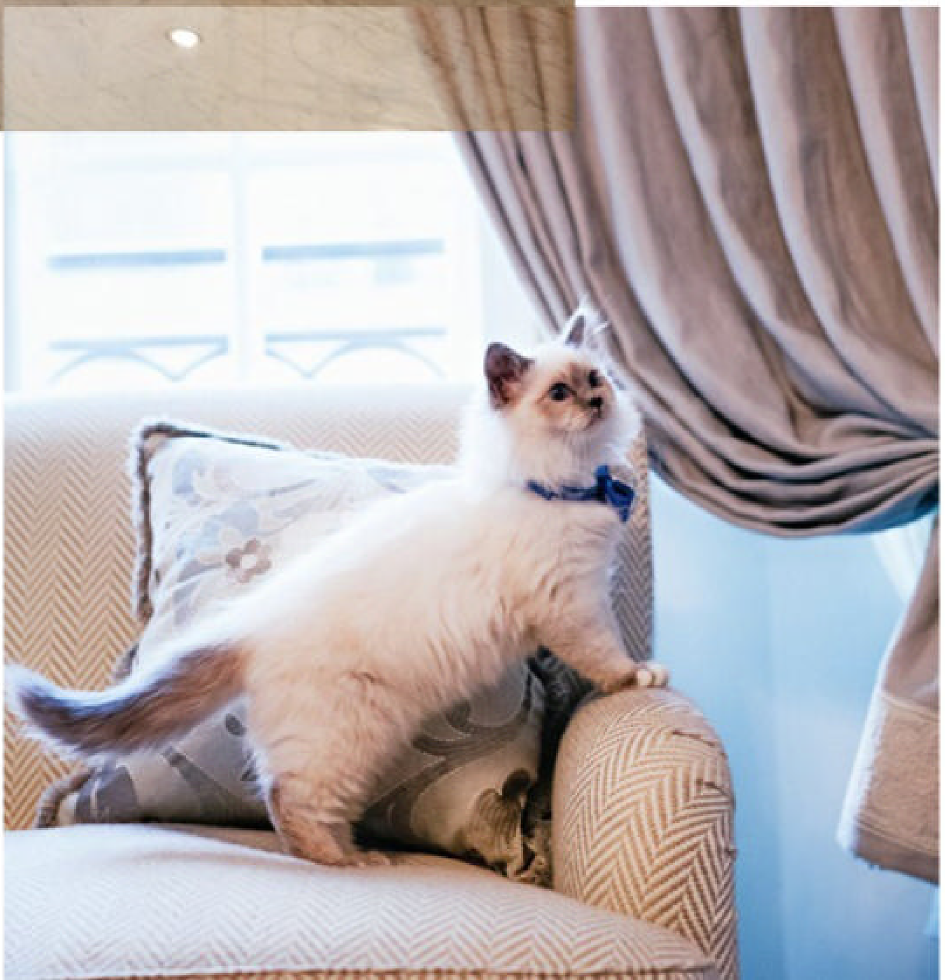
The hotel is a stone's throw from the historic and heavily guarded Élysée Palace, residence of French President Emmanuel Macron, as well as exclusive flagship haute couture boutiques. Stepping left out of the hotel will take you along Rue Faubourg Saint-Honoré, where you can soak up the vivid art galleries and elegant designer shops on your way to the gardens of the Palais-Royal, and the splendid Comédie-Française building. Then you can cross Rue de Rivoli to the Musée du Louvre and its pyramid entrance designed by celebrated Chinese-American architect IM Pei. Alternatively, the Tuileries museums and the Musee d'Orsay are just a 20-minute walk away from the hotel towards the Champs-Élysées.

Paris has so much to offer: there is something for everyone. No matter which direction you turn, you will not be disappointed by this monumental capital city, nor its most celebrated hotel. ◇

lebristolparis.com

The ‘Living Bread’ created by chef Eric Frechon © Benoit Linero. The Matignon Staircase © Claire Cocano. Socrate the resident cat © Franck Juery.





Sands of Time

A look at Banyan Tree Alula, a luxury tented resort on the site of ancient civilisations.

words by Clara Le Fort

The Banyan Tree Alula resort lies in a protected desert near Saudi Arabia's most important archaeological site. As far as the eye can see, desert sands and rocky cliffs compose a lunar landscape that hides traces of ancient civilisations. Listed as a UNESCO world heritage site, the Alula Hegra archaeological site is the largest conserved site of the ancient Nabataean civilisation south of Jordan's Petra.

View of a tented suite covered by a sand-coloured canvas inspired by the nomadic nature of Bedouin architecture. The suite overlooks Maraya cultural centre. © Banyan Tree AlUla

"For us, the meaning is more important than the aesthetic. Nomadic architecture is the most appropriate response in this kind of environment." — Reda Amalou and Stéphanie Ledoux.

It features remarkably well-preserved monumental tombs from the first century BC, as well as structures demonstrating hydraulic expertise in the form of water wells that are still used today. Tied to the desert site is an oasis: the Alula valley is a natural collection point for water running from the surrounding hills, which allows agriculture and plantation.

For centuries, the city of Hegra was a stopping point for caravans on the spice route. It offers real desert climate with extreme heat during five to six months and cool to cold nights in winter.

Now, a recently opened luxury tented site offers a fresh perspective on the monumental site. Designed by Paris-based architecture practice AW2, the 47 tents of The Banyan Tree Alula are a sustainable model for the future.

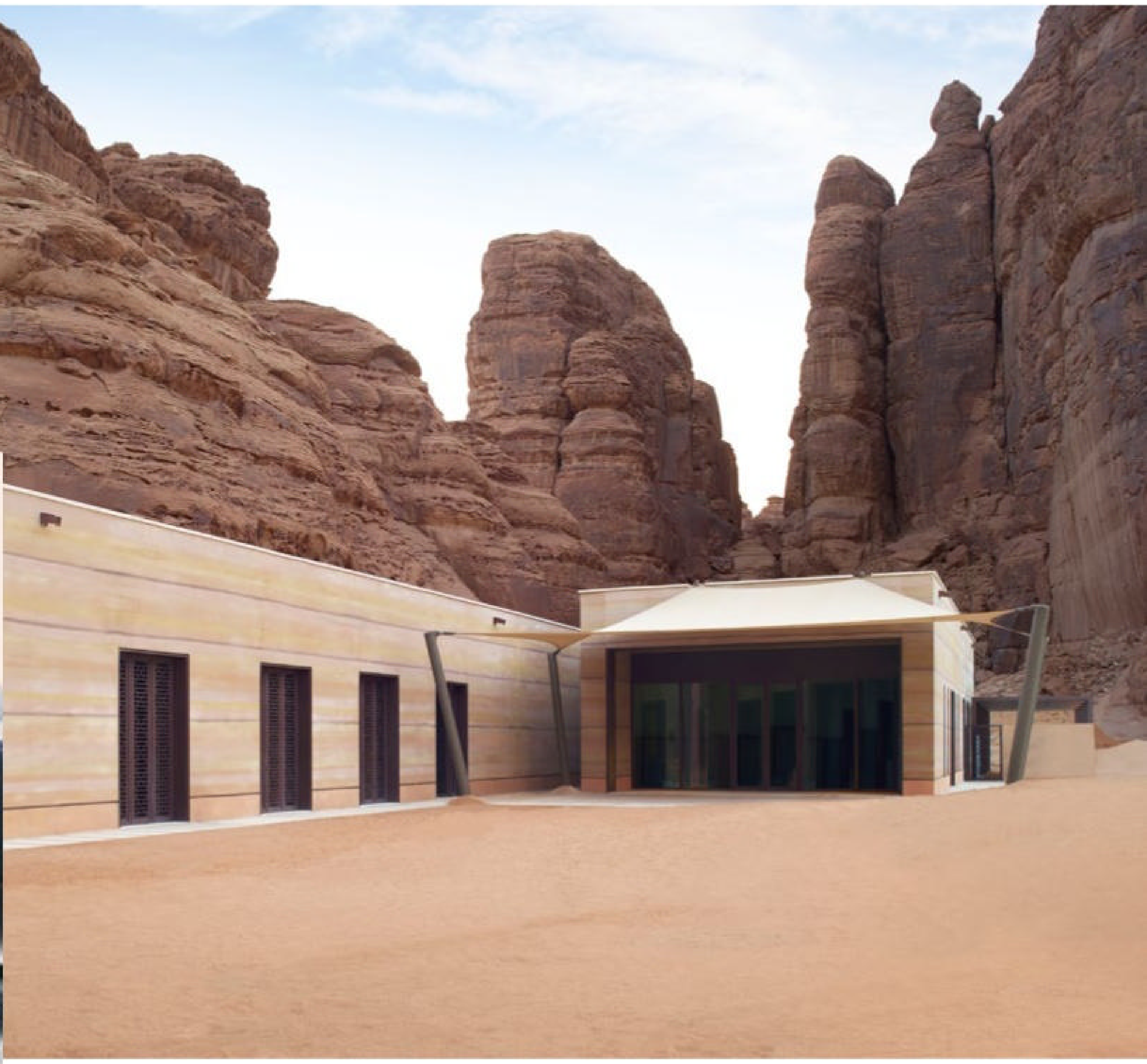
"In the desert you can't hide anything. You must be extremely cautious on how you build for any mistake will show dramatically," Reda Amalou and Stéphanie Ledoux from AW2 explain. "You not only have to reduce the build footprint but have to think hard during master planning about how to build roads for networks and supplies without compromising the beauty and understanding of the place."

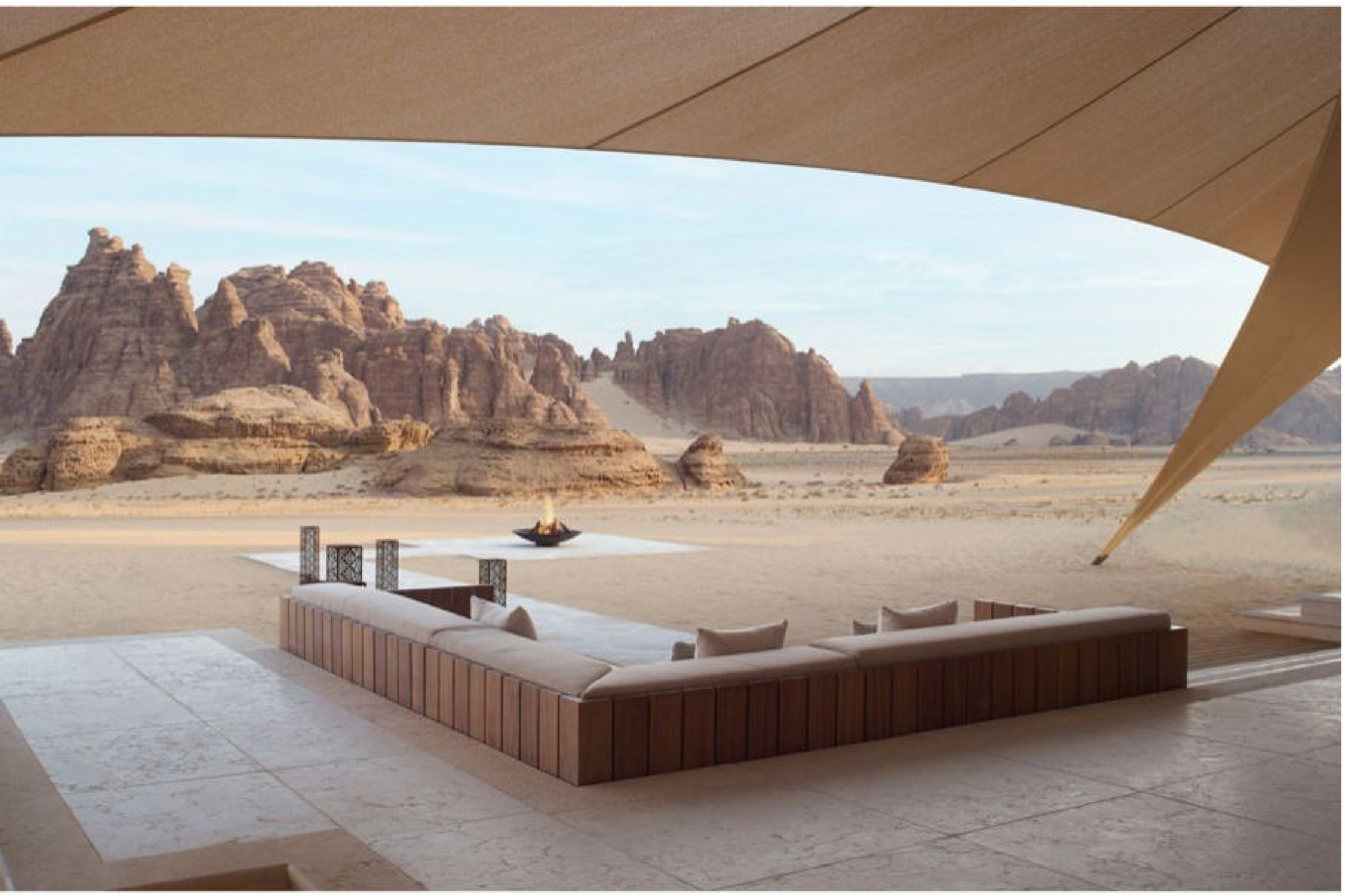
When the project started in early 2019, the challenge was immense. The eco-luxury resort opened in October 2022 and today the 47 tents form their own horizon, some almost disappearing in the distance.

Amalou and Ledoux say: "Our first task was to understand the scale. The site is so vast that architectural elements needed to fit with the topography and merge with the place. We then looked at how architecture and landscapes could dialogue; the dunes' soft lines inform and dictate the structure of the tents. Alula is not a flat desert; it is formed by wavy dunes and cliffs, which we used like walls or backdrops to the architecture. Some suites have open views onto the desert plain and some face the cliffs, which completely changes the perception, scale and understanding of the site," they add.

Choosing the right material was also key in achieving the luxury eco-resort: "The fluid structures not only had to fit with the colour palette of the valley but had to achieve the privacy ambition we all expect in a luxury hotel and protect private outdoor areas from the direct sunlight. Choosing a tent structure that remains very low to the ground and a desert-coloured technical canvas that acts like a canopy and shields the built elements from projected sand and strong winds made sense," the architects explain.

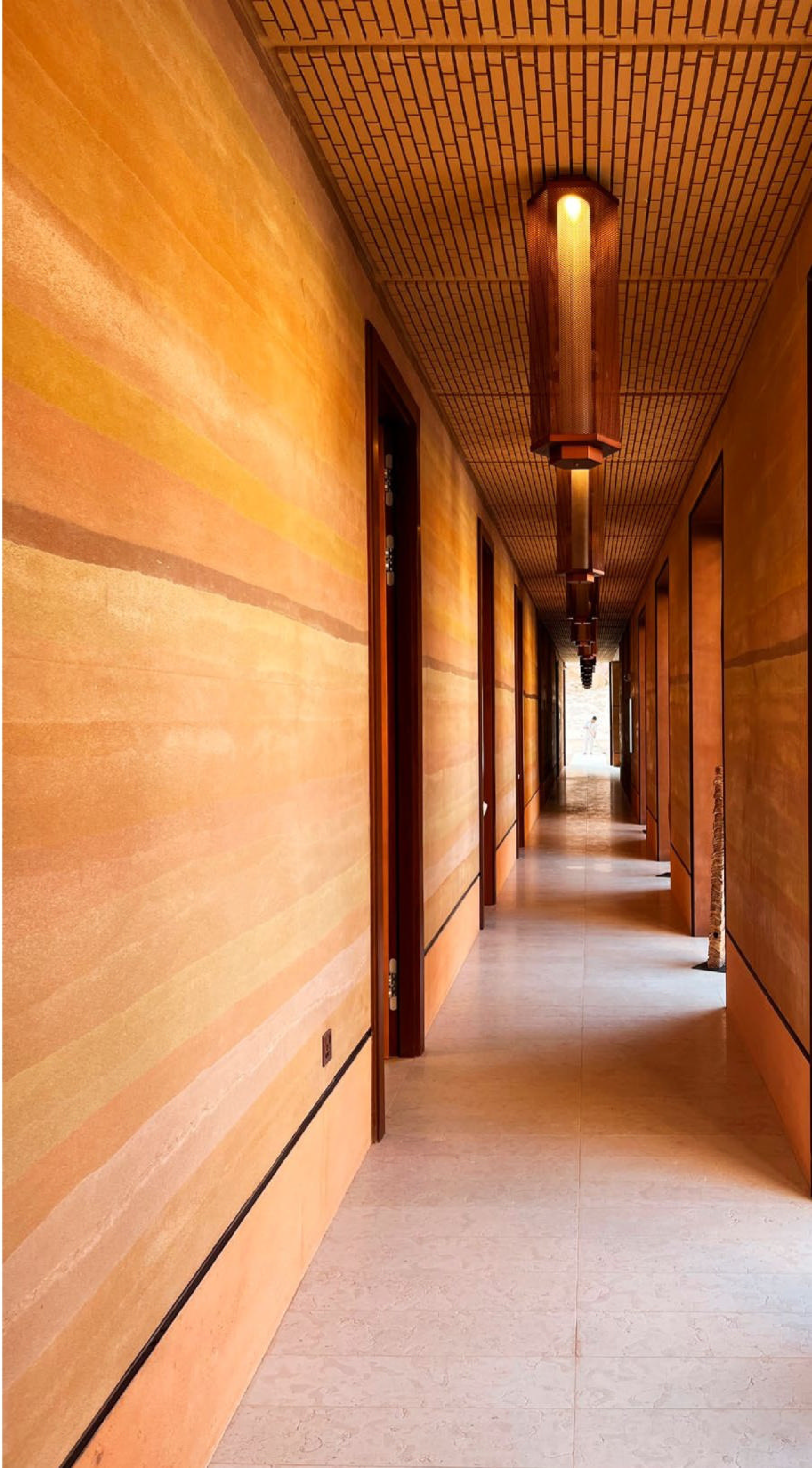
Today, the camp is concealed in the landscape, and further echoes ancient nomadic traditions. Amalou and Ledoux say: "For us, the meaning is always more important than the aesthetics. Nomadic architecture, for example, is the most appropriate response in this kind of environment. Nomadic tents are intelligent: they are raised during the hotter months to let hot air out and lowered during colder months to keep warmth inside. We created the same bioclimatic response by

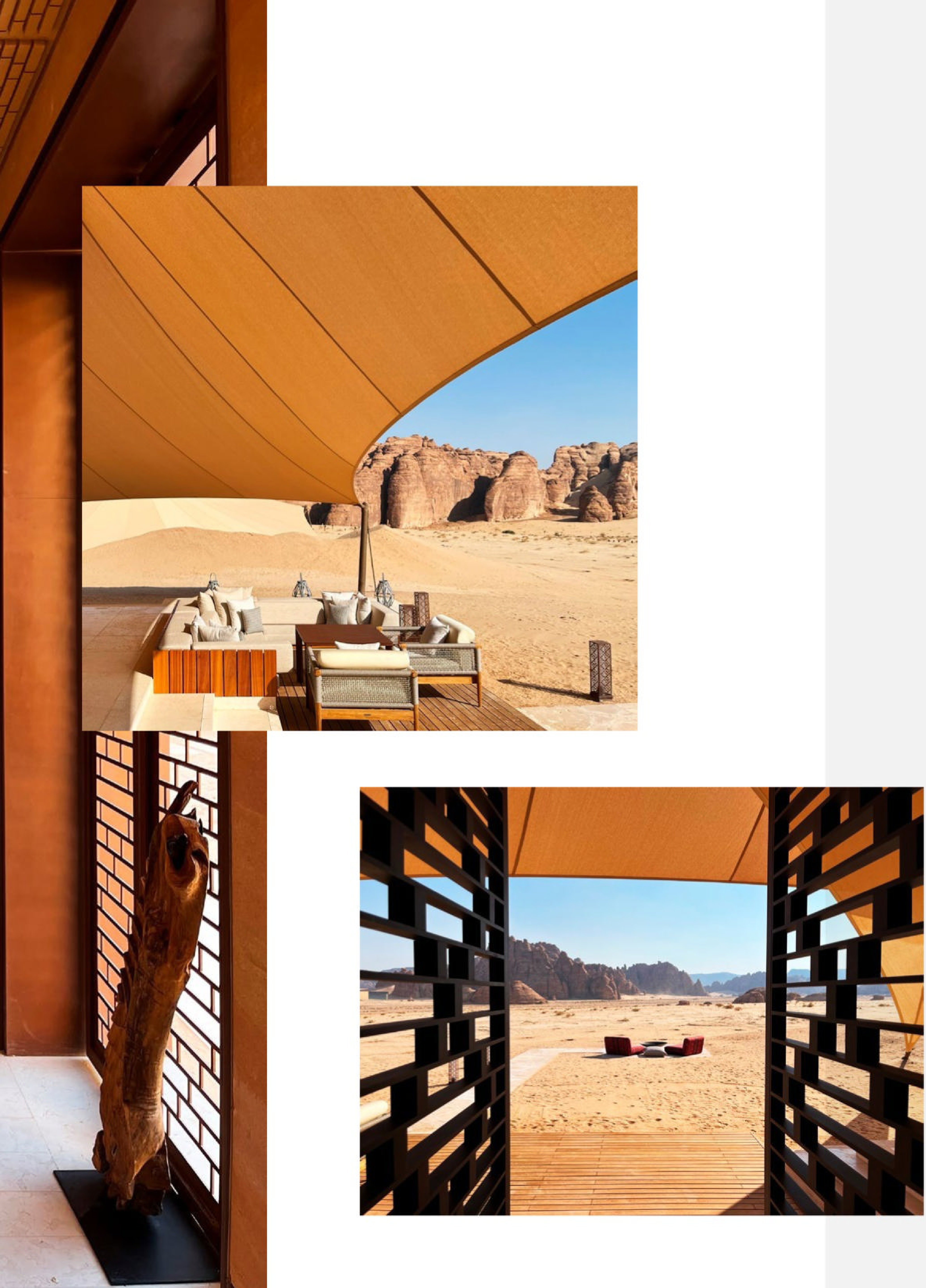




Top: The spa's façades were built using compacted sand: the variation of horizontal coloured sand lines matches the rock formation in the background. Middle: Portrait of architects Reda Amalou and Stéphanie Ledoux. Below: One-bedroom villa with a terrace featuring an external fire pit. The canopy tent seamlessly blends into the landscape. All © Banyan Tree AlUla

Left: The spa's indoor circulation in terracotta, carefully chosen to blend with the natural surroundings. Right: One-bedroom villa terrace with bespoke furniture evoking the rich cultural heritage of Ashar. The colours of the desert are reflected in the colour palette used throughout the design. All © AW2 architecture & interiors





Top: Secluded one-bedroom villa with handcrafted Arabian-inspired handicrafts. Middle: Rock pool nestled amid the majestic sandstone mountains of the Ashar Valley Below: The three-bedroom villa offers breathtaking views. Bespoke furniture design feature nomadic culture and patterns inspired by Nabataean and traditional motifs.
All three pictures © Banyan Tree Alula

> *“We wanted the pool to be unique to the place and not feel like a luxury add-on. As water is naturally collected from the surrounding hills in the Alula desert, we recreated a connection between the rocks and the water.” — AW2 architects.*

creating a natural ventilation flow between the hard structure and the soft canvas canopy above; naturally, the budling’s envelope is cooled down.”

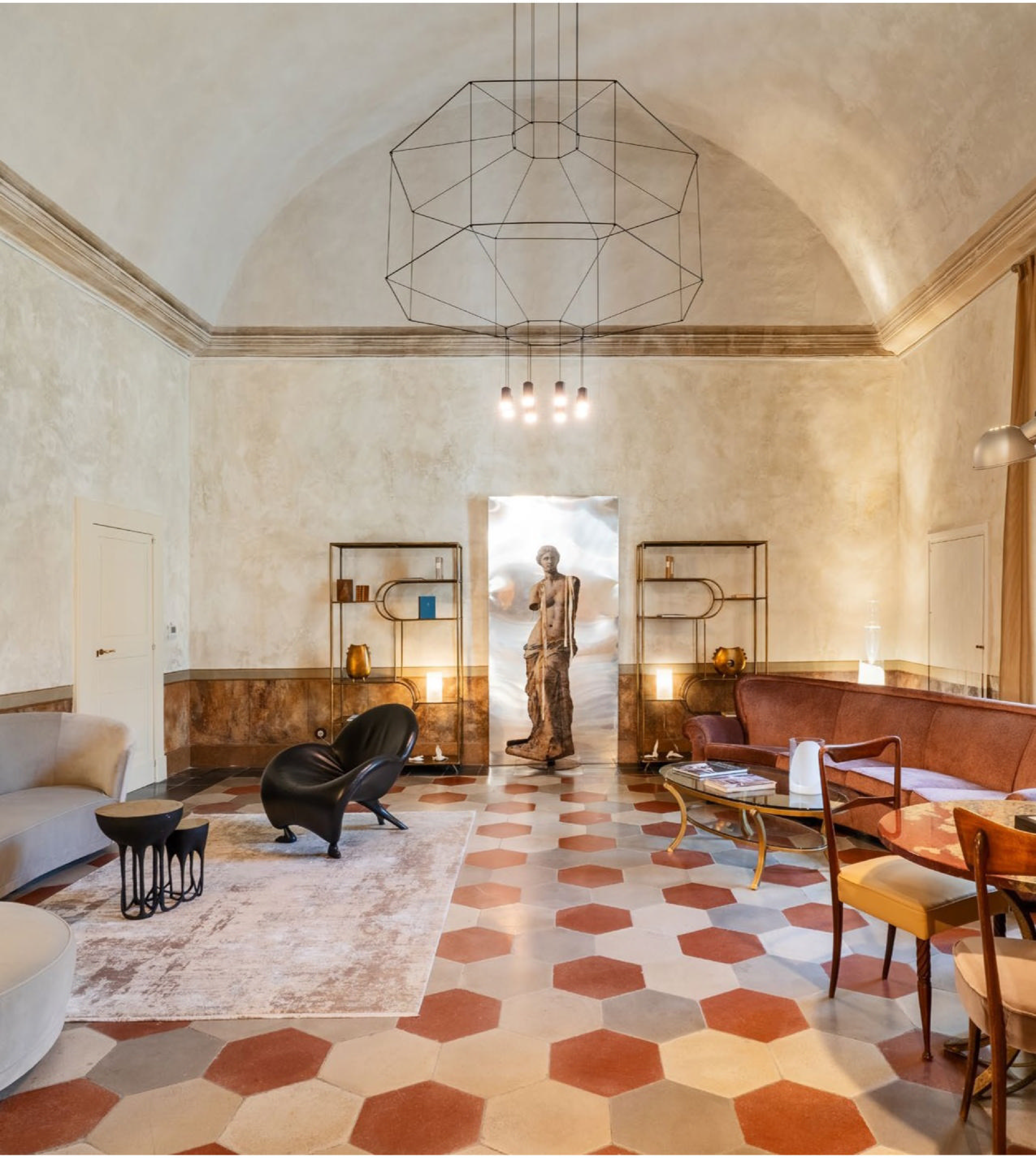
Away from the tents, there is a spa building and pool. Hiding in a natural cove that sits at the bottom of a rocky cliff, the site is naturally in the shade. The free-standing units are made of compacted sand walls: layers of sand of different colours that merge with the surroundings. This ancient building technique is similar to the way adobe walls are traditionally made. Nearby, the swimming pool, a very important element in the scheme, seamlessly blends in the environment.

Far from being square, it mimics the shape of a natural pool at the bottom of the cliffs: “We wanted the pool to be unique to the place and not feel like a luxury add-on. As water is naturally collected from the surrounding hills in the Alula desert, we recreated a connection between the rocks and the water.”

Inside the 150-square-metre suites, guests feel protected from the harsh surroundings. The canvas structure extends onto the exteriors not only to create shade and frame the views but also to connect the inner courtyard with the suite’s swimming pool.

Amalou and Ledoux say: “This transition between the inside and outside is a cornerstone of Arabic architecture. We added six-metre-wide large windows to widen the views, yet the interiors remain minimal. We selected mainly wood, rope and metal, the main materials used in nomadic furniture, and used Nabataean patterns and motifs to create contemporary interiors.” At night, the whole site has a dark-sky policy; as the sky lights up, the lighting is dimmed below the canvas, creating a soft halo around each tent. ◇

www.aw2.com/en



Palazzo Maresgallo was transformed into a palatial hotel with historical salons and museal living spaces.

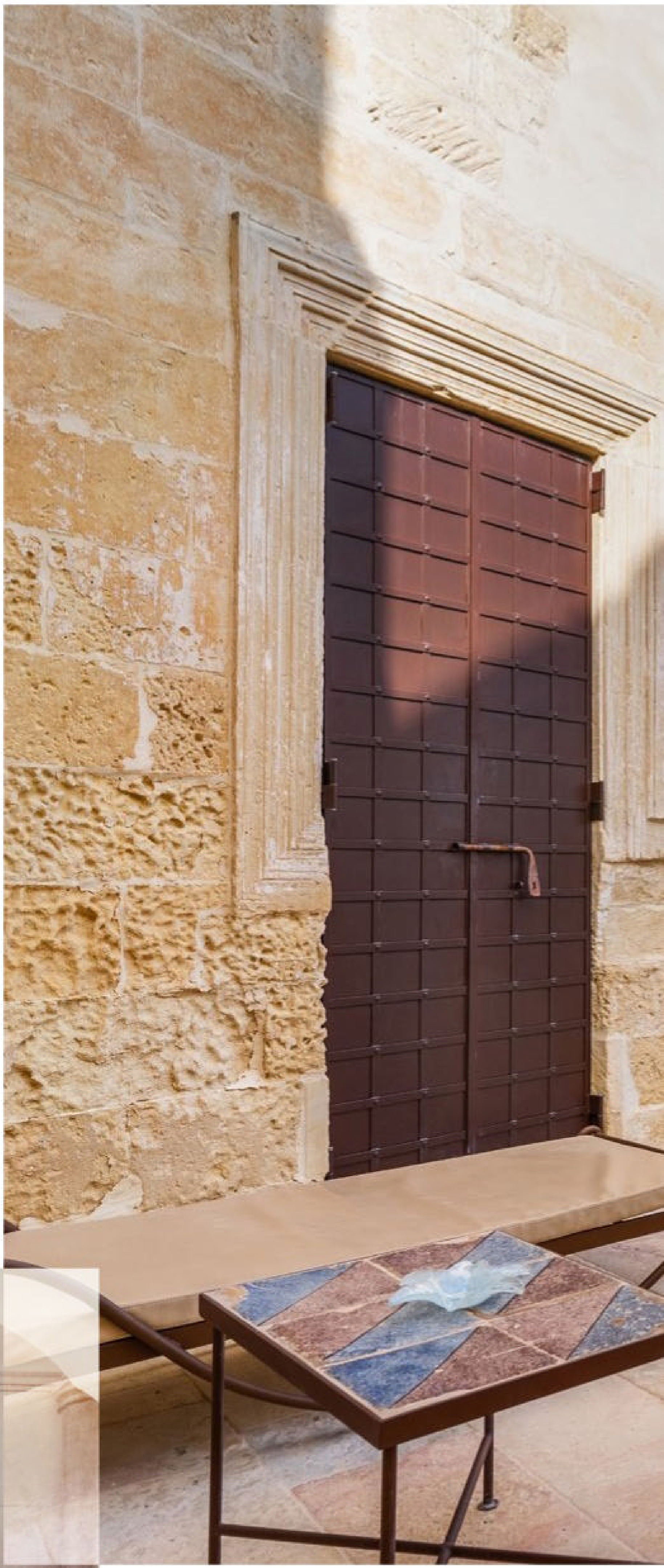
Collector's Dream

Inside the renovation of a four-century-old palazzo in Italian UNESCO world heritage site, Lecce.

by Clara Le Fort

Located in the historical heart of the Baroque town of Lecce, Italy, 16th century Palazzo Maresgallo was in poor shape when Miriam and Lionel Gazzola visited it. They had no plans to buy or renovate it. He had a long-standing career in restructuring old buildings; she had the perfect collector's eye and a unique taste for art, fashion and design. Together, they already had a house in Salento, on the coast, where they regularly disconnected from a frantic Parisian life.

“It was love at first sight — mixed with fear, awe and excitement — when we discovered the palazzo.” — Miriam Gazzola.



Clockwise from top: A suite. On the rooftop terrace, one overlooks Lecce’s listed city centre. Owner Miriam Gazzola has an eye for fashion and art.

> *"Our idea was not to create a hotel but to open all spaces for visitors to enjoy; it is very much about living in a historical palazzo surrounded by art." — Miriam Gazzola.*

"It was love at first sight — mixed with fear, awe and excitement — when we discovered the palazzo," Miriam recalls. Most of the windows had been walled, the façade blackened and some of the floors had collapsed.

That's when Lionel Gazzola took centre stage: "Renovating and restructuring are two very different things: to restructure a four-century-old palazzo, you brace yourself with patience, listen to the building and look attentively at every inch, respecting immensely what was built and the traces left over time. It's like being a mole and digging into layers of history," he explains.

Relying on the best local artisans and craftsmen was also key. Inside the palazzo — which mixes classical and baroque elements — Lionel had to redefine the volumes, create floors, reopen doors and demolish walls, adding a wooden frame, even, to create one of the suites. After two years of construction work, Palazzo Maresgallo was bought back to its former glory, just in time (albeit in the midst of the pandemic) for Dior's Croisière show in Lecce in 2021.

Lecce's historical centre is a UNESCO world heritage site: from the palazzo's rooftop, one looks up to the Campanile del Duomo and down into an ancient Roman open-air theatre. In between, the Gazollas have recreated a garden lush with citrus trees and a small pool. Past the first patio, all rooms tell the story of a collector's home, starting with the entrance that unfolds like a grand hall with a stunning mural painted by Roberto Ruspoli: titled Il Sole Anche di Notte, it literally dances on the vaulted walls and ceiling, and refers to an archaic dance typical of the Salento region.

The artist also sculpted ceramic pieces that are scattered across the floors and rooms. For Palazzo Maresgallo, figuration is a guiding thread: contemporary sculptures, historical busts, colourful harlequin paintings by Maxime Vardanian and expressive photographs bring life into the double-height salons, study and living rooms on the first floor.

"Our idea was not to create a hotel but to open all spaces for visitors to enjoy; it is very much about living in a historical palazzo surrounded by art," says Miriam. Each object and surface around the palazzo have been hand-picked or made to measure: bronze leaves designed as handles on doors or a chest of drawers; custom-printed trompe l'oeil wallpaper to maximise a perspective; steel-frame dining chairs covered in papier mâché; and freshly upholstered vintage furniture bought from antique shops. Right down to the water carafes and the coffee cups — also made by an artist — a stay at Palazzo Maresgallo is any collector's dream. ◇

palazzomaresgallo.com/en/

An elegant patio lies behind a quattrocento wooden door.

HOME COMFORTS

“There is no place more delightful than one’s own fireside.” — Cicero

The lobby at Féau Boiseries decorated with Claude-Nicolas Ledoux's wood panels, 'The Four Continents.'

If These Walls Could Talk

Loved by billionaires, fashion designers and interiors gurus, antique woodworker Féau Boiseries is something of a national treasure.

by Tara Loader Wilkinson

On a foggy January morning, fifth-generation business owner Guillaume Féau greets us with a warm smile and Nespresso at his prestigious woodworking enterprise, Féau Boiseries. Tucked away on a quiet Parisian street, this 148-year-old institution is sought out by the world's wealthiest for its woodwork replications taken from the most famous designers of the Regency, Rococo, Neoclassical, Empire, and 20th century periods.

"The love of the classic has always been there, but now there is mixing modern design with classical architecture; for example, a Picasso or a Basquiat with contemporary furniture."
— Guillaume Féau.

Féau regrets he can't stay too long; he has an appointment with a US billionaire fashion designer to discuss panelling for her apartment in Paris's prestigious 7th arrondissement. It will take inspiration from The Four Continents by Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, one of the earliest exponents of French Neoclassical architecture. It features the carvings of a camel, a lion, a crocodile and a stallion; he points out the original in the lobby.

"Her room will be Givenchy-style: simple, white, beautiful small details, classical, nothing heavy, just good proportion. She's got great taste," Féau says with admiration. Funnily enough, he adds, her apartment is right next to another long-time client, currently the world's richest man, although he has a quite different style.

Féau's undertaking is unique. In his labyrinthine warehouse on Rue Laugier, a veritable cave of wonders, he has collected some 300 complete pieces of antique panelling, wood and plaster, guilding and painting, as well as some 25,000 fragments from the most iconic designers of the 17th-20th centuries — it's a genuine private museum.

Billionaire clients and interior designers stop by to browse the cornucopia of treasures; which includes fireplaces, cornices, doors and bookcases. When they spot a piece that sings to them, Féau's craftsmen can reproduce an almost indistinguishable copy, or perhaps adjust it to better suit their client's taste, using a different grain of wood or a splash more gold leaf, and install it in the property. Occasionally, Féau will sell the original, although he says he prefers not to.

"The love of the classic has always been there, but now there is a trend towards mixing modern design with classical architecture; for example, mixing a Picasso or a beautiful Basquiat with contemporary furniture," he says.

As we wander round, he points out a Neoclassical cornice that once decorated Christian Dior's historic premises on Avenue Montaigne; a boiserie that previously adorned Jean-Pierre Guerlain's Paris apartment; and a reproduction of an Art Deco carving of a female figure, created by Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann, for Lord Rothermere's apartment on the Champs-Élysées. Féau purchased this piece at an auction in Paris about a decade ago and, more recently, perhaps a little reluctantly, sold it to the Louvre Abu Dhabi for its permanent collection.

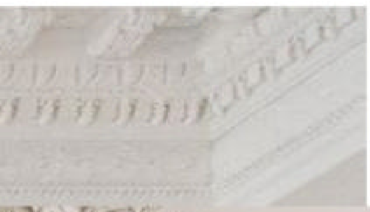
Each piece has its own story that he recounts with encyclopaedic knowledge — not to mention the inside track on the scandals that went with them.

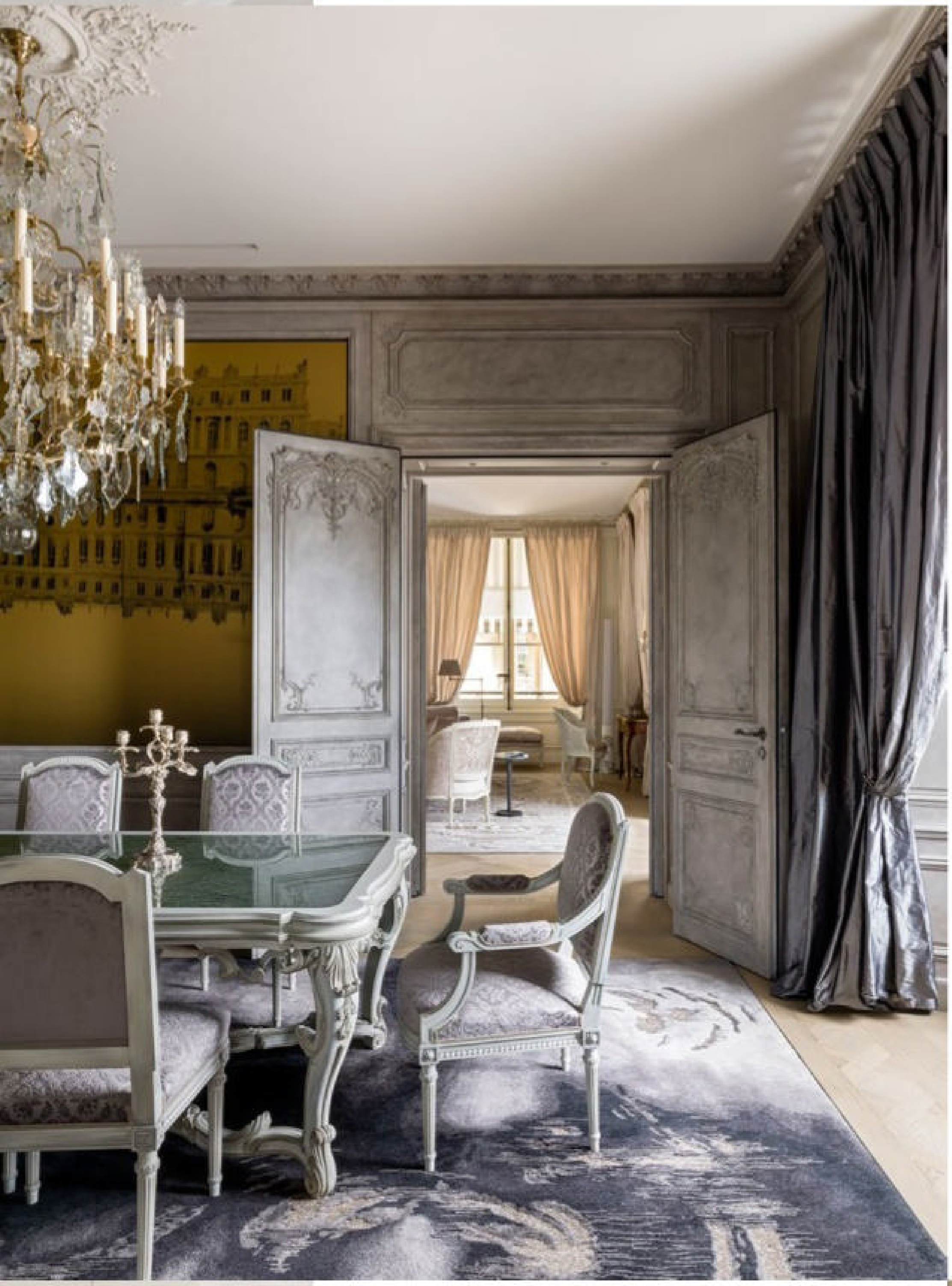
Tall and slightly stooped, softly spoken, with kind blue eyes, dressed in an understated navy turtleneck and matching long woollen coat, the father of four gives the sense of a man with patience, in spades. It's a characteristic that must come in handy in this job, working with some of the world's most A-list, demanding people. "Guillaume is also very good at saying 'no', in just the right way," comments a colleague with a smile.

Clients, past and present, read like a who's who. For example, when late fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld was tasked with the refurbishment of the Presidential Suite at Paris's legendary Hôtel de Crillion, there was only one firm he would trust with the sourcing and installation of the reconstruction antique wood panelling.

"Karl loved wood panelling and he exactly knew what he wanted. He loved the symbolism of some of the pieces," says Féau, pointing out a panel carved with a rich bouquet of flowers from Madame de Pompadour's château at Crécy-Couvé, where the King and his favourite conducted their love

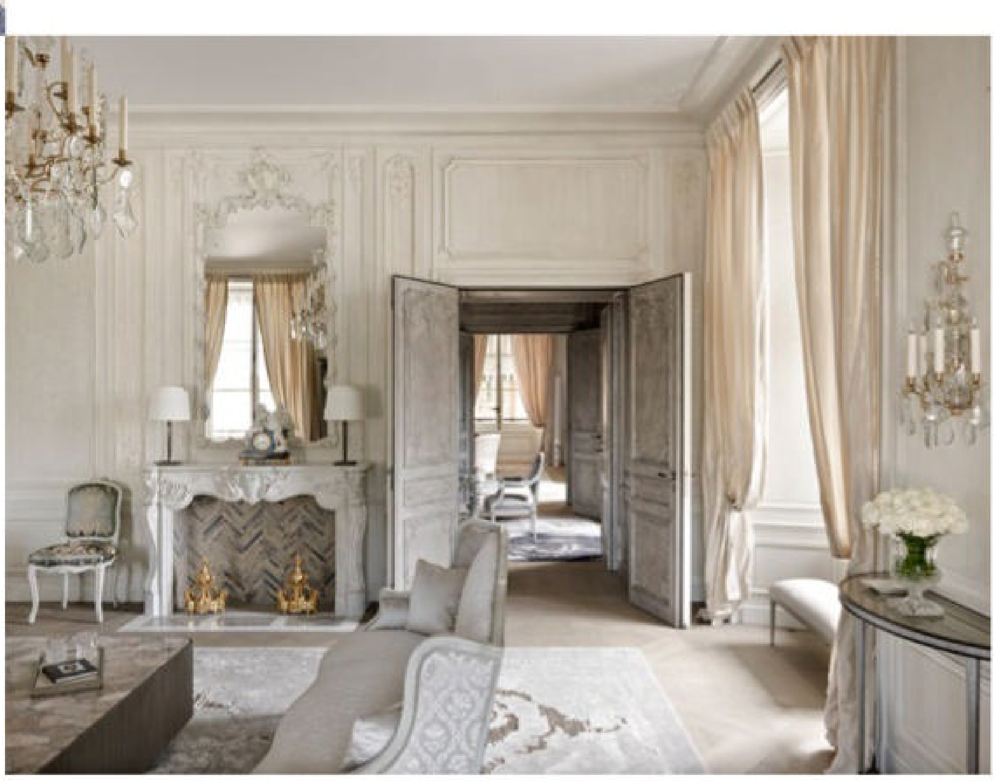
Samples of antique wood panelling in the Féau Boiseries stockroom in Paris.

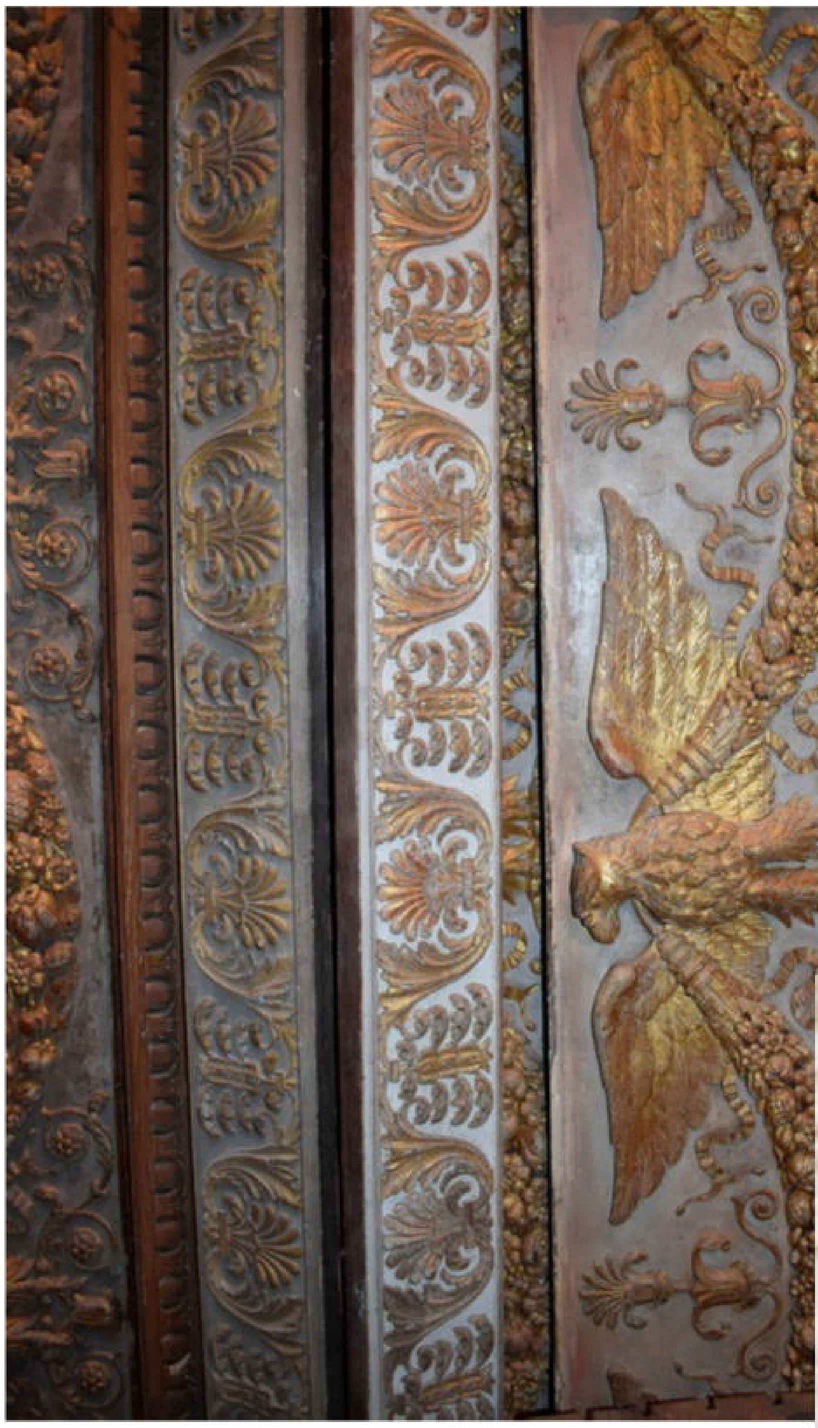




"Karl Lagerfeld loved wood panelling and he exactly knew what he wanted. He loved the symbolism of some of the pieces." — Guillaume Féau.

Right: The Féau Boiseries lobby with glass sculpture by Jean-Michel Othoniel © Arthur Sloth. Left: Karl Lagerfeld used panels from Féau Boiseries to update the Presidential Suite at Hôtel de Crillon, completed in 2017.





Samples of antique wood panelling in the Féau Boiseries showroom in Paris, and Guillaume Féau.

"It radically changed the business. Instead of being interior designers, we went back to being sought-after suppliers." — Guillaume Féau.

affair. "Boiseries often contain coded messages," he explains. "This one signified a connection to the King."

Other clients include Michael S Smith, the US interior designer who refurbished the White House's private apartments for the Obamas. Smith called on Maison Féau to reproduce several panels in two apartments for an art-collecting client. Panelling for the Obamas was also discussed but, in the end, the price tag was too steep. To deck out a full room, it costs upwards of £300,000. To purchase an original panel could cost up to £8 million. "This is really something mostly for billionaires," he explains, with an apologetic air.

With a team of 120-odd craftsmen mainly trained by the prestigious French apprentice scheme Les Compagnons du Devoir, Féau Boiseries works on approximately 80 rooms a year from Hong Kong to Singapore to Japan, the US and Europe. Some clients commission Féau to work on all their homes; one client had him redesign all five of his properties. They have collaborated on the decor of some of the world's most tasteful properties, including Palais Rose in Paris and Villa Ephrusi for Rothschild in Saint Jean Cap Ferrat.

But the firm's reputation was not always prestigious as it is today. Founded in 1875, it started out as it does today, selling reproduction antique woodwork to the 200 most important families in France. "They were extremely wealthy, they used to build 30,000-square-foot mansions in the time of the 18th century revival," he recalls. That golden age finished with the First World War. In subsequent years, his grandfather and father turned the business into an interior design studio, and trade slowed down, Féau says. As a young man, Féau had a nagging feeling that more could be done.

In his early 20s, Féau was working for an interior designer in San Francisco, who needed some classical woodwork for a house in Pebble Beach. "He confirmed the idea I had to return quickly to France and go back to the original, the first business model." It wasn't an easy conversation to have with his father. "At the beginning we fought, but then after a few months he realised I was right, and he decided to retire.

"It radically changed the business. Instead of being interior designers, we went back to being sought-after suppliers. From the end of the 1990s we became very successful with the new billionaires in the US, Europe and Asia," says Féau.

As he looks to the future, his sons are the likely successors of Féau Boiseries. He is particularly excited about the progress of the firm in Asia; he will likely install one of his sons in Hong Kong or Singapore to launch the business in the next five to 10 years.

He says: "It's truly a story of passion and the quintessence of French craftsmanship." ◇

Château Mouton
Rothschild at sunset
© Pierre Revelle.

Label Mates

Julien de Beaumarchais de Rothschild on his unique job: commissioning blue-chip artists to design labels for Château Mouton Rothschild.

by Daniel Nash

As jobs go, Julien de Beaumarchais de Rothschild has a completely unique one. Born in 1971, the younger son of Baroness Philippine de Rothschild, it is up to him to commission the artist to illustrate the label each year for the legendary château, a tradition continued annually since 1945. Salvador Dalí, Marc Chagall, Joan Miró, Pablo Picasso and Henry Moore are just a handful of the famous names whose original designs have graced its bottles.

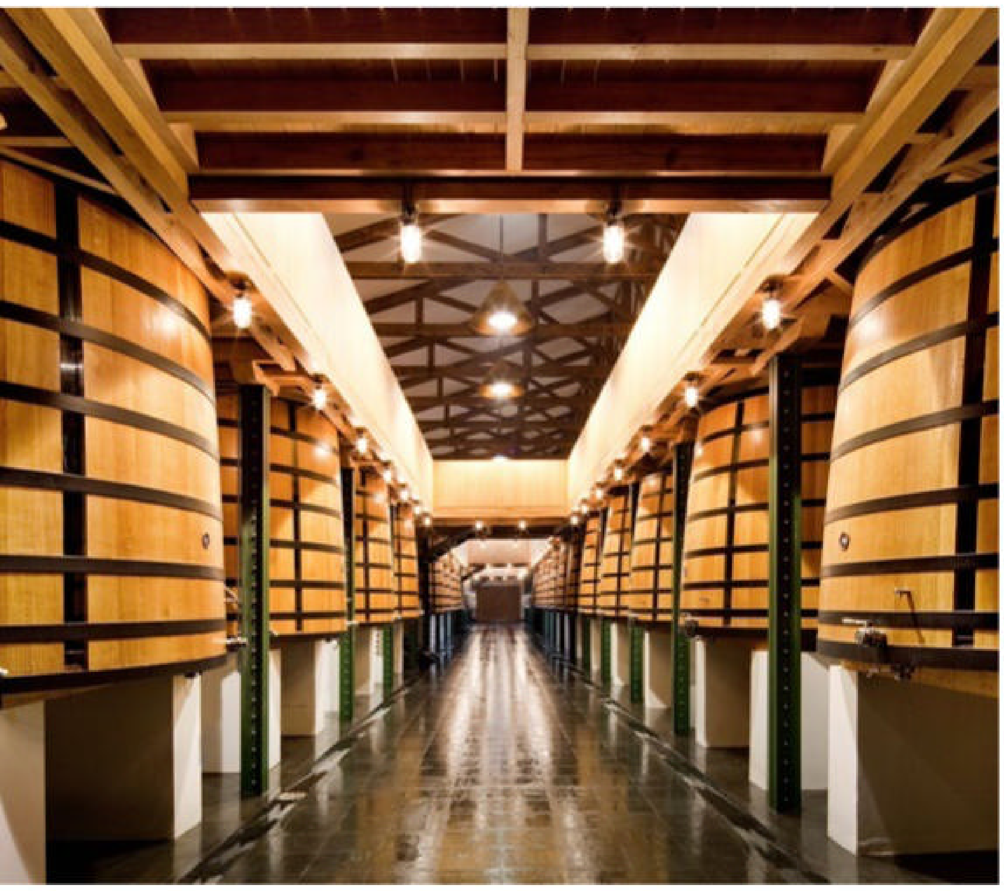
> *"We choose only those artists whose reputation equals that of Mouton. No artist in our collection ever needed to illustrate a label in order to boost their career." — Julien de Beaumarchais de Rothschild.*

Previously his mother's prerogative, he has overseen this responsibility since her death in 2014, when he selected painter and sculptor Miquel Barceló as the artist for Mouton 2012. De Beaumarchais de Rothschild studied art history and worked for several years at galleries and dealers until 2009, when he decided to devote the bulk of his time to the family business, where he became a member of the Supervisory Board.

He describes his singular role maintaining the legacy of the tie between art and wine at the storied château.

How did your grandfather come up with the idea?
The adventure of Mouton Rothschild and art started in 1924. However, the intention was not to associate a great artist with the label but rather to celebrate the birth of a revolutionary innovation, when my grandfather Baron Philippe de Rothschild (1902-1988) insisted on bottling the entire harvest at the château. To give his decision an eye-catching visual dimension he commissioned the design for the label from poster artist Jean Carlu. The Cubist label was ahead of its time and not well received. But Baron Philippe was not one to let go of an idea lightly. In 1945 with the return of peace he crowned the label for the vintage with the 'V' for victory, drawn by young painter Philippe Jullian. Since 1945 a different artist has been invited each year to create an original artwork for the vintage.

How are artists chosen?
We choose only those artists whose reputation equals that of Mouton. No artist in our collection ever needed to illustrate a label in order to boost their career. Today, I lead the selection



Top: Peter Doig discussing his label with Julien de Beaumarchais de Rothschild © Mathieu Anglada. Middle and Below: The vat room © Alain Benoit/Deepix.

> *"Doig's paintings fascinate in the way their exceptional technique serves to create a mysterious, dreamlike atmosphere that invites you to feel, to contemplate, perhaps to smile a little bit sometimes." — Julien de Beaumarchais de Rothschild.*

process in consultation with the two other owners of Château Mouton Rothschild: my sister Camille Sereys de Rothschild and my brother Philippe Sereys de Rothschild. Artists are chosen first and foremost because we like their work. We also try to ensure that the artists vary from one year to the next, in terms of their cultural background, their means of expression and their artistic universe. For example, there is a very clear difference between our choice of Peter Doig for Mouton 2020 and Olafur Eliasson's label for Mouton 2019. The artists are not paid — they never have been and never will be — but are given cases of Château Mouton Rothschild as a token of gratitude, including some of 'their' vintage, of course.

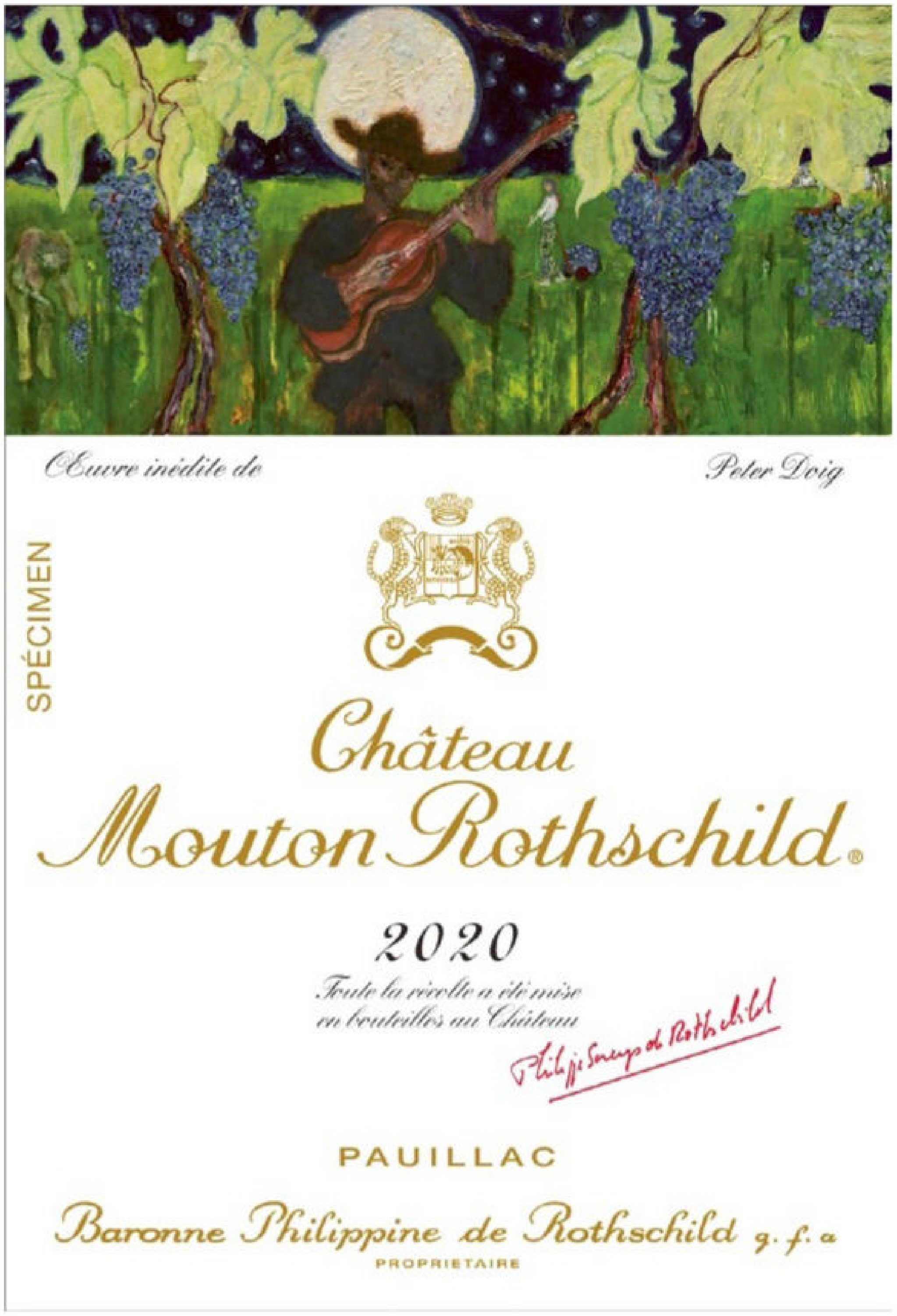
How are you steering this tradition into the future?
I started in September 2014, for the 2012 vintage because the wine has to mature for two years. The label for Mouton 2012 is illustrated with a wonderful fresco by painter and sculptor Miquel Barceló. He had been chosen personally by my mother Philippine de Rothschild but I was in charge of the whole process. It was a highly emotional experience, coloured by life, death and the perpetuation of great art by great artists from one generation to the next. So that makes nine labels altogether: Miquel Barceló, 2012; Lee Ufan, 2013; David Hockney, 2014; Gerhard Richter, 2015; William Kentridge, 2016; Annette Messager, 2017; Xu Bing, 2018; Olfaur Eliasson, 2019; and Peter Doig, 2020. First and foremost, I choose famous artists for whose created world I have a personal liking. My priority is of course to keep the tradition alive in the present, investing myself in the process each year with enthusiasm and determination. But I look to the future and would like to diversify the range of creative techniques, as well as artists' cultural origins.

Did you have a background in art before you took up this responsibility?
My grandfather first revealed the intimate link between wine and art to me when I was a child. Captivated by all forms of art, I studied art history and then worked in the art world at Artemis Fine Arts and Salamander Fine Arts, dealing in Old Master paintings and drawings. The creators of those works had been dead for a very long time but, after 2014, having become responsible for the artists who would illustrate the label for our next vintage, I found myself dealing with famous people with strong personalities who were very much alive.

How did you pick the artist of the current vintage?
For Mouton 2020, we wanted an artist who uses canvas and pictorial material to express figurative subjects. Unrivalled as a colourist, Peter Doig focuses entirely on painting and has become one of his generation's foremost exponents of the discipline, holding exhibitions all over the world. There is something very special about his technique and his universe that sets them apart in contemporary figurative art. Doig's subjects are very varied, his painting resists any classification; he has succeeded in creating his own, inimitable world. Doig's paintings have no message or concept but fascinate in the way their exceptional technique serves to create a mysterious, dreamlike atmosphere that invites you to feel, to contemplate, perhaps to smile a little bit sometimes.

Do you have some collectors who have all the bottles?
There is no doubt about that. To complete their collection of our artists, lovers of Mouton are always on the lookout for a missing vintage, not only in a standard bottle but also in larger formats. That sometimes gives rise to auction-room battles. They may originate in the wish to own all the formats of a single vintage, as recently with the exceptional result of a Sotheby's auction of Mouton 2020. They can also occur when several collectors at the same time seek to acquire a bottle bearing the missing label and artwork.

What is your favourite label?
My favourite label is always the new one; it is impossible for me to choose. I love them all because each label, each artwork created for Mouton, is so exciting and unique. Each has its own story, its own anecdotes, and I wouldn't like to single out any one in particular. They are all so full of life that I much prefer to tell their story at Mouton, in front of each display case in our Paintings for the Labels exhibition. So come and see me there. ◇


Œuvre inédite de
Peter Doig
SPÉCIMEN
Château
Mouton Rothschild®
2020
Toute la récolte a été mise
en bouteilles au Château
Philippine de Rothschild
PAUILLAC
Baronne Philippine de Rothschild g. f. a
PROPRIETAIRE

Peter Doig's label for the 2020 Château Mouton Rothschild vintage.

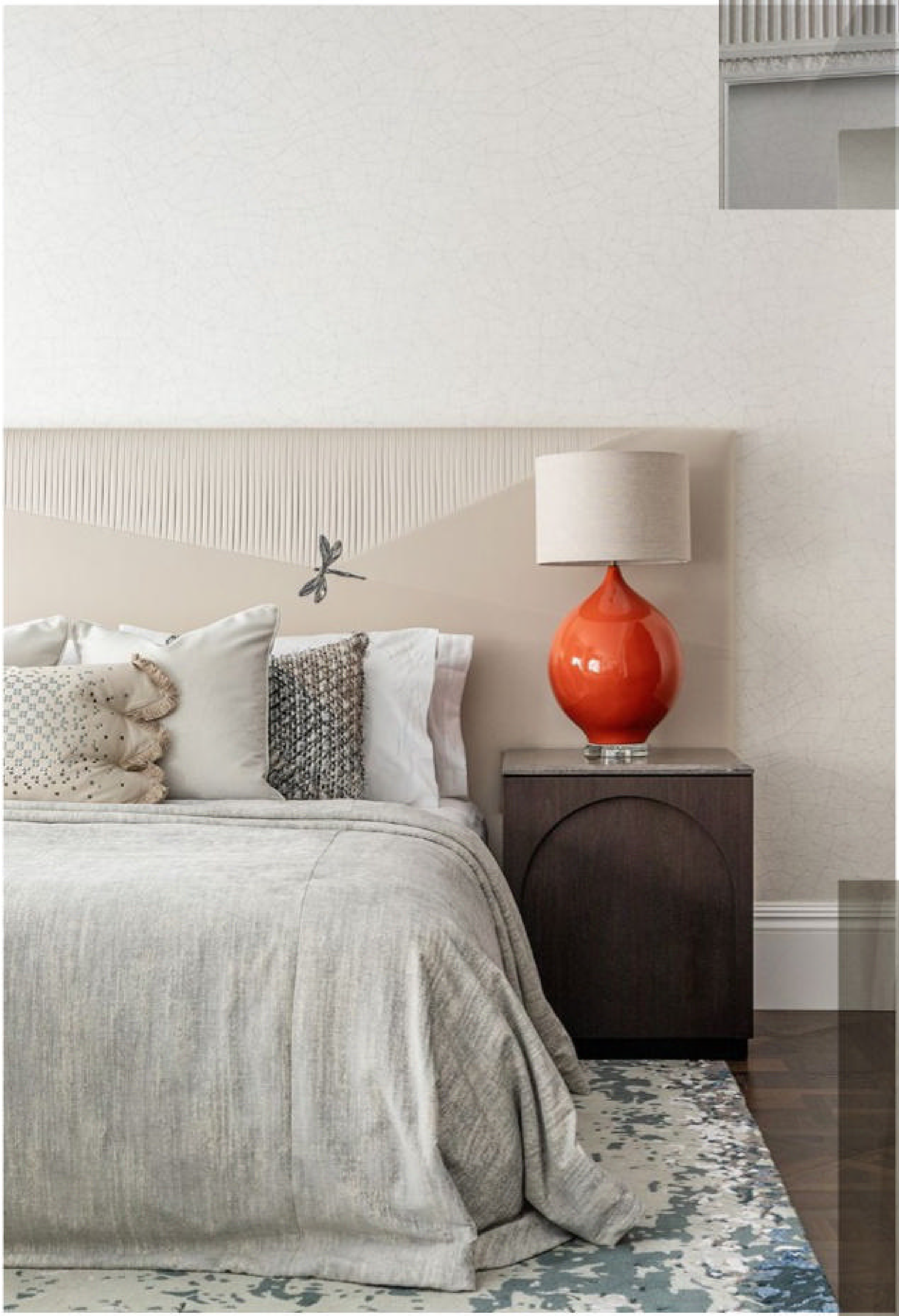
Aiveen
Daly at her
home in
London with
a Mandala
Ottoman and
curtains she
created from
vintage saris.

Material Girl

Aiveen Daly introduces forgotten textile techniques into elite interiors.

by Tara Loader Wilkinson

In a world saturated with machine-made objects, the touch of the hand is all the more sought after. This is the opinion of Irish-born Aiveen Daly, an award-winning designer who has made a name hand-making ethereal, tactile embellishment in the palaces, private jets and penthouses of the world's well-heeled.



Top: Home of Aiveen Daly where her Arbus & Gold leaf effect textile art sits above the fireplace. Middle: Dragonfly headboard by Aiveen Daly at The House of Walpole. Below: Venetia Stiletto Chair at the home of Aiveen Daly.

“The age we are living in, surrounded by technology, people want something with a human connection, an intriguing provenance.” — Aiveen Daly.

“The age we are living in now, surrounded by technology, people want something with a human connection, an intriguing provenance. That is true luxury nowadays,” she says, dialling in from her home in London, where she lives with her two daughters, aged 13 and 10, and Australian husband.

Daly’s studio is located near Kensal Green in north-west London, where, as we speak, her team of five makers with eclectic backgrounds — one is from fashion, another, an ex-car interior trimmer — will be beavering away. Complex fabric manipulation techniques such as beading, pleating, folding and embroidering headboards are executed on wall panels, dining chairs and even ceilings, working with materials such as silk, wool and leather with flawless precision.

Her studio works with interior designers such as Katharine Pooley, SHH and superyacht designers Winch, as well as winning direct commissions from luxurious hotels such as Corinthia in London and The Langham, Hong Kong. “For our end clients, everything in their home is not only bespoke but the best of the best, from their clothes, cars, and properties, even down to their photo frames,” she explains.

Daly was catapulted into the spotlight after her work in the Candy brothers’ glitzy One Hyde Park development in Knightsbridge. At the time of launch in 2010, the property made headlines for its penthouse, which reportedly sold for £140 million, the most expensive residential property in Britain. Daly and her team created the master headboard with an interlocking pleat, and dining chairs with detailed stitchwork on the back, using her signature couture cutting techniques. She said it was a turning point.

“It was the first high-end prime property that was talked about and it opened doors for us. Suddenly, I was being taken seriously as a maker in that space,” she says.

Daly believes her success lies in the fact she came into the textiles space “very sideways”. Born in Cork, schooled at a “typical Irish convent school”, she was gifted a sewing machine for her 14th birthday, which first ignited her love of textiles. But she was “gently discouraged” from pursuing this as a career.

“Growing up in Ireland, they weren’t encouraging that sort of route,” she recalls. “It was before the ‘Celtic Tiger’ [a period of rapid economic growth in Ireland], and hard to get anything creative. It was the era of ‘get a sensible degree, think of your pension’.”

Daly opted for a degree in Russian and business at Trinity, and then moved into marketing in luxury and travel publishing. “I still had a burning desire to do something with textiles, but I didn’t

> *“For our end clients, everything in their home is not only bespoke but the best of the best, from their clothes, cars, and properties, even down to their photo frames.” — Aiveen Daly.*

have the confidence to pack it all in.” She took night classes in sewing and textiles at the London College of Fashion and drawing and painting classes at Central Saint Martins. It was, however, a professional upholstery course that introduced her to textile manipulation, and she fell in love with the craft. Then it was a case of “sticking with it”, and doggedly securing appointments with top interior designers until they sat up and took notice.

Daly recently collaborated on a project she created at No. 1 Palace Street, a collection of 72 ultra-luxury residences adjacent to Buckingham Palace. The 3,600-square-feet show apartment was designed by Oliver Burns in conjunction with developer Northacre and Walpole, the British luxury brands body. It featured the work of 250-plus solely British designers; Daly’s studio was responsible for the dining chairs and the headboard of the bed in the guest suite. The silk chairs, which took two months to make, were inspired by the movement of a soothing stream embroidered across their backs, for which Daly used the rare Irish loom. The headboard, half-pleated and embroidered with a dragonfly, was particularly tricky.

“The diagonal line running through it looks very simple, but stitching a perfect straight line on the bias is a hard thing to do, especially along a two-and-a-half-metre width. We had to have a few goes,” she admits. Each piece usually takes around four weeks to make at the studio, but projects can run over years, she says.

When we speak, 49-year-old Daly is buoyed after just having been named one of the 50 most influential people in British luxury heading up the ‘creatives’ category at the annual Walpole Power List, a benchmark of British craft and creativity. The award recognised her recent private body of wall sculptures called Coralation, created out of some 10,000 meandering ribbons, all pleated by hand. In the lead-up to World Oceans Day on 8 June 2023, a percentage of all commissions of the Coralation series will go to the Coral Reef Alliance, which aims to conserve coral reefs internationally. Coral reefs are close to her heart, she adds, because of her Australian cameraman husband’s work around the Great Barrier Reef.

“It is a departure for me as the ribbon sculpting is intuitive — whereas many of my previous commissions have been precisely measured to an exacting brief. While the pieces are painstakingly detailed, the freedom to play with movement and shapes lends a unique character that is understated but dynamic with lots of light play,” she says. “This new, personal body of work was born from my desire to create more intimate, intricate art reflecting the quieter side of my persona.” ◇

Top: 'Coralation' ribbon artwork by Aiveen Daly at home in London. Top left: Hand-beaded Stiletto chair at the home of Aiveen Daly. Middle right: Wave ribbon artwork commissioned by Fenton Whelan for Park Modern © Matt Clayton. Below: Textile art as meditation. Aiveen Daly works intuitively, working on ribbon textile artwork 'Coralation'.

To Sleep, Perchance to Dream

Horsehair has remained the most precious asset of Swedish family-run bedmaker Hästens.

by Clara Le Fort

Sleep is a serious business, at least according to Hästens, a family-run company founded in 1852 when Pehr Adolf Janson, then a self-trained skilled craftsman in poor rural Sweden, was awarded his certificate as a master saddler by the King of Sweden.

For centuries, Hästens' crafting techniques and tools have remained unchanged.

“We constantly improve our skills and techniques and look for better materials but, to date, we clearly haven’t found anything better than horsehair.” — Jan Ryde.

He named the company Hästens, which means horse in Swedish, and, to this day, horsehair has remained the company’s most precious asset. Following the family tradition, the second generation quickly adapted to changing times. Per Thure Janson started crafting horsehair mattresses, seats and cushions for Sweden’s first automobiles.

From then on, manufacturing the most exceptional mattresses and beds was the natural way forward. The recipe for an exceptional bed remains the same: countless layers of cotton, wool and horsehair. “At Hästens every day is about remembering where we come from. We don’t use complicated formulas. Here, function designs form. We design beds to last for generations, without ever compromising on the price or number of layers,” fifth-generation owner Jan Ryde explains.

Visiting the manufacture (which feels very much like a family home with pictures of the employees lined up at the entrance) the blue-check pattern stands out. It is a visual symbol of quality and has remained unchanged since 1978 when it was first introduced at the Stockholm Furniture Fair as a futuristic bed designed to last to the year 2000. What is the epitome of a great bed today was then considered ugly.

From top: Jan Ryde, fifth-generation owner of Hästens, founded in 1852. Working with horsehair cannot be separated from Hästens modern-day business: twisted, braided and coiled (above), horsehair — which acts as thousands of minute, natural springs — is then spread by hand in each layer of the bed mattress (left).

From top: Factory workers in 1925. A royal visit to the Swedish factory.

Since 1852, the recipe for an exceptional bed remains the same: countless layers of cotton, wool and horsehair.

“We want people to invest in their health, for health starts with good sleep,” says Jan Ryde facing another wall of fame, picturing stars and famous sportspeople — George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Ronaldo, Tom Hanks and Oprah Winfrey, to name just a few.

The quality of Hästens’ beds is mainly due to one star element: horsehair. Washed using organic soap, it is twisted into long braids and left to dry for three to six months. Once the tension is released, the horsehair becomes a fluffy cloud of tiny, intertwined springs.

Layered and fixed together by hand in between a soft cotton and wool mixed sheet, they support each muscle and help regulate body temperature (they have a natural ventilation quality and dry up quickly, sucking up the body’s excess of heat). “We constantly improve our skills and techniques and look for better materials but, to date, we clearly haven’t found anything better than horsehair,” says Ryde. The bed’s

Left: To this day, every mattress is stitched by hand on the outside to structurally reinforce it. Middle: View of the factory where the classic Blue Check mattresses and over-mattresses have been crafted for 45 years. Right: From above, the Hästens factory historically features a running horse — for hästens means horse in Swedish.

frame is made of FSC-sourced slow-growing pine; recycled steel springs are individually wrapped in cotton and cellulose (a natural material derived from wood); and fixed using a mixed flax bake, that muffles sound and removes electricity from your body. All the layers are pressed together to compose the mattress, which is then hand stitched together to make sure it doesn't collapse over the years. Every mattress comes with a 25-year warranty.

Nothing is left to chance in a Hästens bed, which is geared towards prioritising good sleep. "People must prioritise buying a Hästens bed over a new car that won't last as long... and might not have the same health benefits. You need to prioritise yourself," says Jan Ryde. ◇

www.hastens.com

FRESH EYES

“It’s not what you look at that matters; it’s what you see.” — Henry David Thoreau

Charles Jencks, Cells of Life, 2003-2010 © Allan Pollok-Morris/ Jupiter Artland.

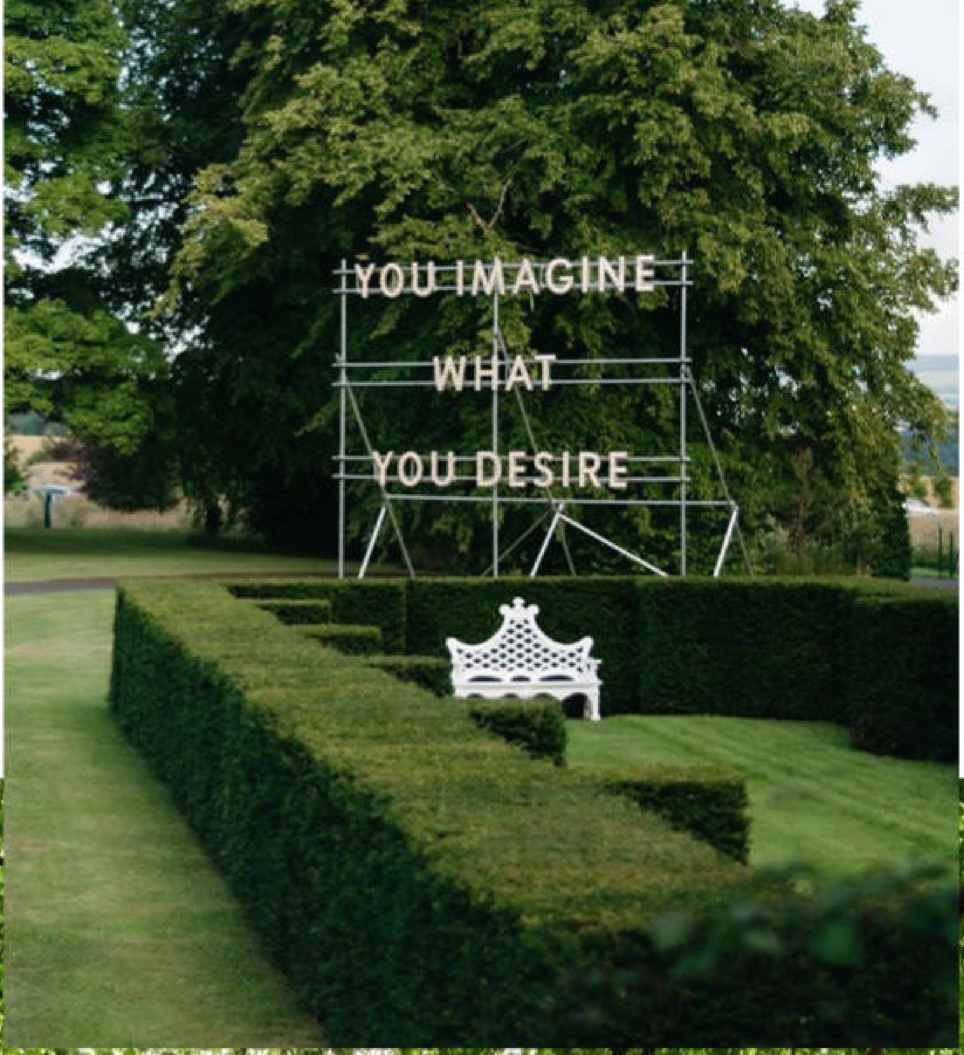
Art in Orbit

In Scotland, a husband-and-wife team are channelling their 100-acre sculpture park for educational outreach.

Tara Loader Wilkinson

Nicky Wilson's happy place is being surrounded by art. This much is evident as I Zoom into her kitchen in London's Notting Hill, where she has popped down from her main home in Edinburgh. Her backdrop is a row of monographs from ancient books by Turner-nominated Tacita Dean; she is facing a triptych of Antony Gormley paintings; the shelf above is filled with a collection of wonky Hungarian pots; a Victor Pasmore abstract is on the wall; and, in the corner, sits a gilded-and-pink lamp created by late supermodel Stella Tennant.

Top: Nathan Coley, You Imagine What You Desire 2014 © Keith Hunter / Jupiter Artland.
Middle: Nicky Wilson © Eleanor Edmondson.
Below: Tracey Emin, I Lay Here For You 2022 © Allan Pollok-Morris/ Jupiter Artland.


YOU IMAGINE
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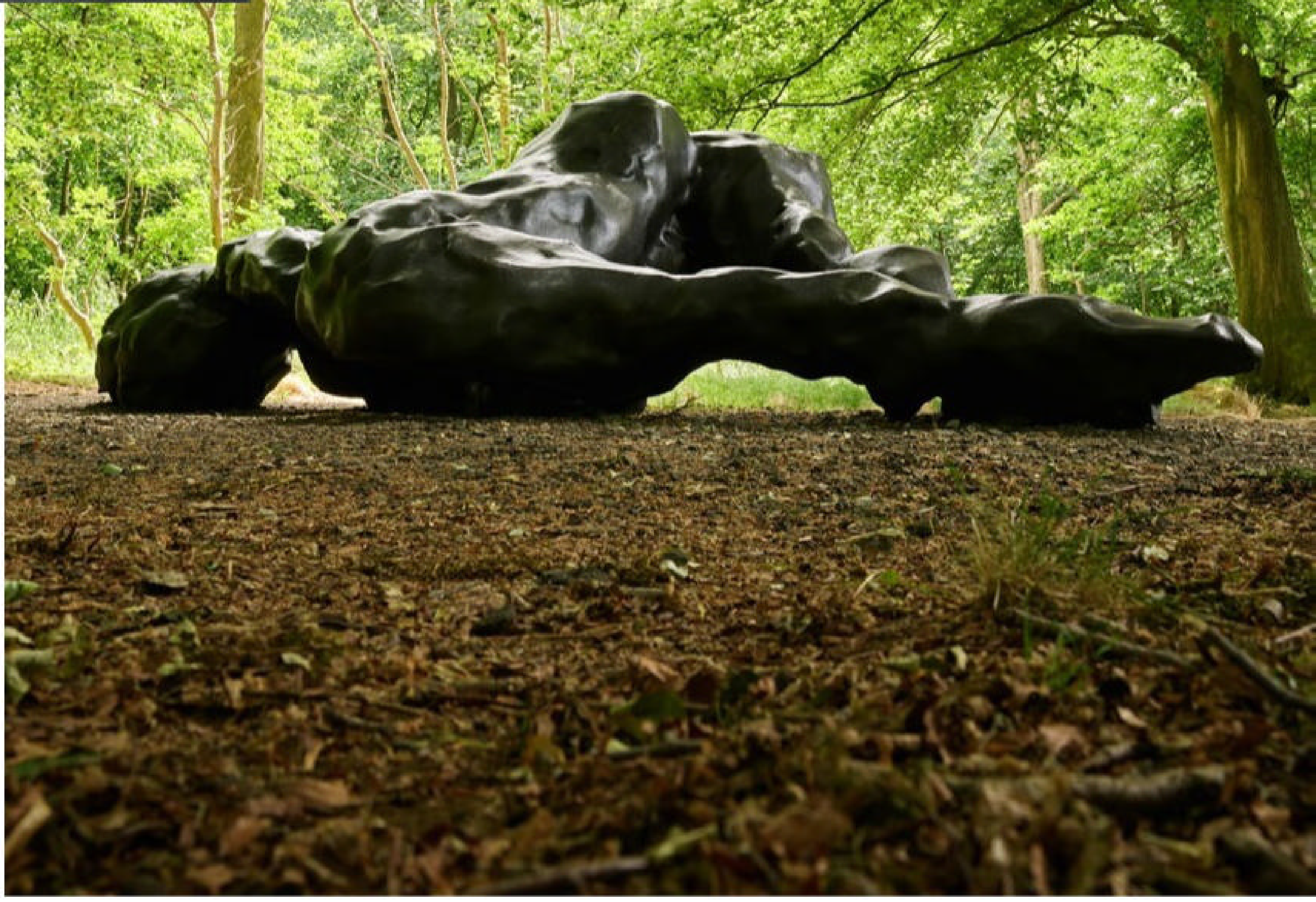
YOU DESIRE



"There was never a masterplan. It was more a conversation at the kitchen table, bouncing a baby on the knee and saying 'let's do this.'" — Nicky Wilson.

After our call she has a coffee date with Tracey Emin, whom she collects and has great affection for. ("She's bloody impressive. You can't make artwork like that unless you're a very intelligent, perceptive human being.") Last year, they installed Emin's 6m bronze figure of a naked masturbating woman in a quiet woodland clearing in Jupiter Artland's sculpture park. Emin chose the site.

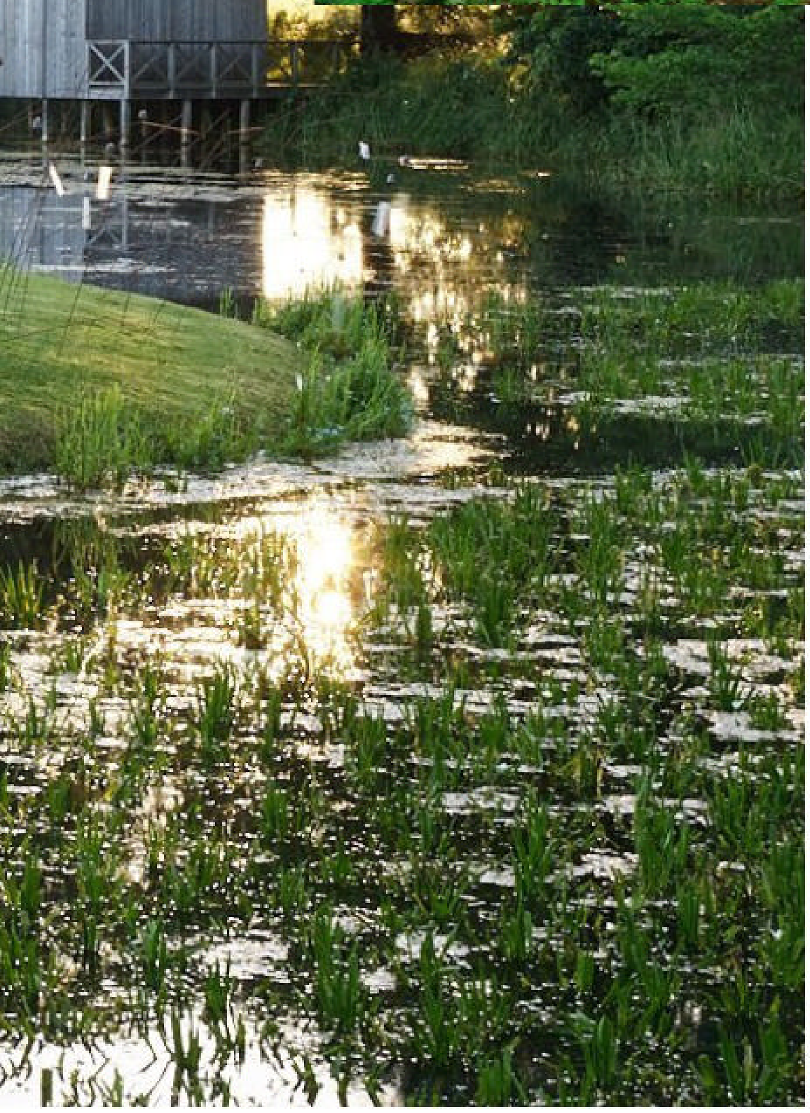
Nicky's passion for art is perhaps unsurprising as she is co-founder of Jupiter Artland, one of Scotland's most significant arts organisations located just outside of Edinburgh. Set over 100 acres of woodlands, forests and meadows within the grounds of Bonnington House, a 17th century Jacobean manor house, a visit to Jupiter Artland's sculpture park will take you past nearly 40 site-specific works from the art world A-list by Marc Quinn; Andy Goldsworthy; Anish Kapoor; Charles Jencks; Cornelia Parker; Antony Gormley; Tracey Emin; Phyllida Barlow, and more. Open to the public between May and September, it also includes a rolling programme of exhibitions in its four internal gallery spaces.

Wilson never set out to create an art foundation; in fact, it happened almost by accident. She trained at Chelsea College of Art and worked successfully as an artist herself for many years until her 30th birthday, when she decided that the balancing act of being a mother and an artist had become untenable. "As a sculptor my work was difficult and dangerous, with a toddler wandering around and a baby crawling across the floor." She stopped making work thinking she would pick it up, but then kept having babies. She has five children aged between 26 and 19, none of whom, she admits, disappointingly, have followed her into the arts.

Her Irish-born husband Robert Wilson, co-founder of Jupiter Artland, is heir to the homeopathic medicine giant Nelsons (established in 1860 and best known for its Bach's Rescue Remedy), which he runs with his brother Patrick. They had moved from Fulham to the semi-derelict 1708 Scottish castle in 1999, purely for a bit more space. Robert worked in London during the week and commuted back to Edinburgh for the weekends. Surrounded by young children and without her art as an outlet, Nicky grew restless.

"We had moved from London to this house in Scotland and I was left with the babies, in the middle of nowhere, and was fairly glum. I thought to myself: I'm not going to be like this. This place is beautiful and it needs to be shared," she recalls. "There was never a masterplan," says Wilson. "It was more a conversation at the kitchen table, bouncing a baby on the knee and saying 'let's do this,'" she says. "The first artists we contacted to create work for us were humble enough to pick up the phone and say, 'sure, I'll see what I can do.'"

The late US landscape artist Charles Jencks was one of the first to arrive; Nicky hired a digger and a driver and in 2008 together they carved dramatic tiered terraces and vast lakes into the



"The first artists we contacted to create work for us were humble enough to pick up the phone and say, 'sure, I'll see what I can do.'" — Nicky Wilson.

Left: Christian Boltanski, Animitas 2016 © Allan Pollok-Morris/Jupiter Artland. Top Right: Andy Goldsworthy, Stone Coppice 2009 © Allan Pollok-Morris/ Jupiter Artland. Right Below: Anish Kapoor, Suck 2008 © Allan Pollok-Morris/ Jupiter Artland.

“The aim is for every school child in Scotland to at some point come and see the park for free.” — Nicky Wilson.

fields at the park’s entrance, like a spiritual, sculpted rice paddy. “Making replenishes the soul. My work as sort-of producer satisfied that need to create,” says Wilson.

The park blossomed from its opening in 2009 and has welcomed around a million visitors since. It runs an extensive school outreach programme. “The aim is for every school child in Scotland to at some point come and see the park for free,” she says. The programme runs on Mondays for community groups and Wednesdays and Thursdays for nurseries, schools, further education and universities. The park has won awards for the artist residencies they run on site to support postgraduate artists.

Wilson is as passionate about stoking creativity in young people as she is about art. “Creativity is not prioritised; STEM subjects is the buzzword of our time,” she says. She deplores the recent substantial drop in UCAS applications to study humanities subjects.

“The arts encourage young people to find their own voice, to discover their agency, because unlike STEM subjects, they can have an opinion,” she reasons. “It creates confidence in them and encourages elasticity of the brain to think outside the box. You can tell people who have been brought up in a creative environment. They’re the ones who believe their votes count and their input matters; they’re the future pipeline of talent. Who wants to live in a future that isn’t creative?” ◇

Top: Littlesparks school outreach programme 2013 © Brian Fischbacker/ Jupiter Artland. Middle: Shane Waltener Over Here 2007 © Allan Pollok-Morris/ Jupiter Artland. Below: Artsparks school outreach programme 2015 © Peter Dibdin /Jupiter Artland.

The prestige tunnel at
new winery at Ca' Del
Bosco © Mattia Aquila.

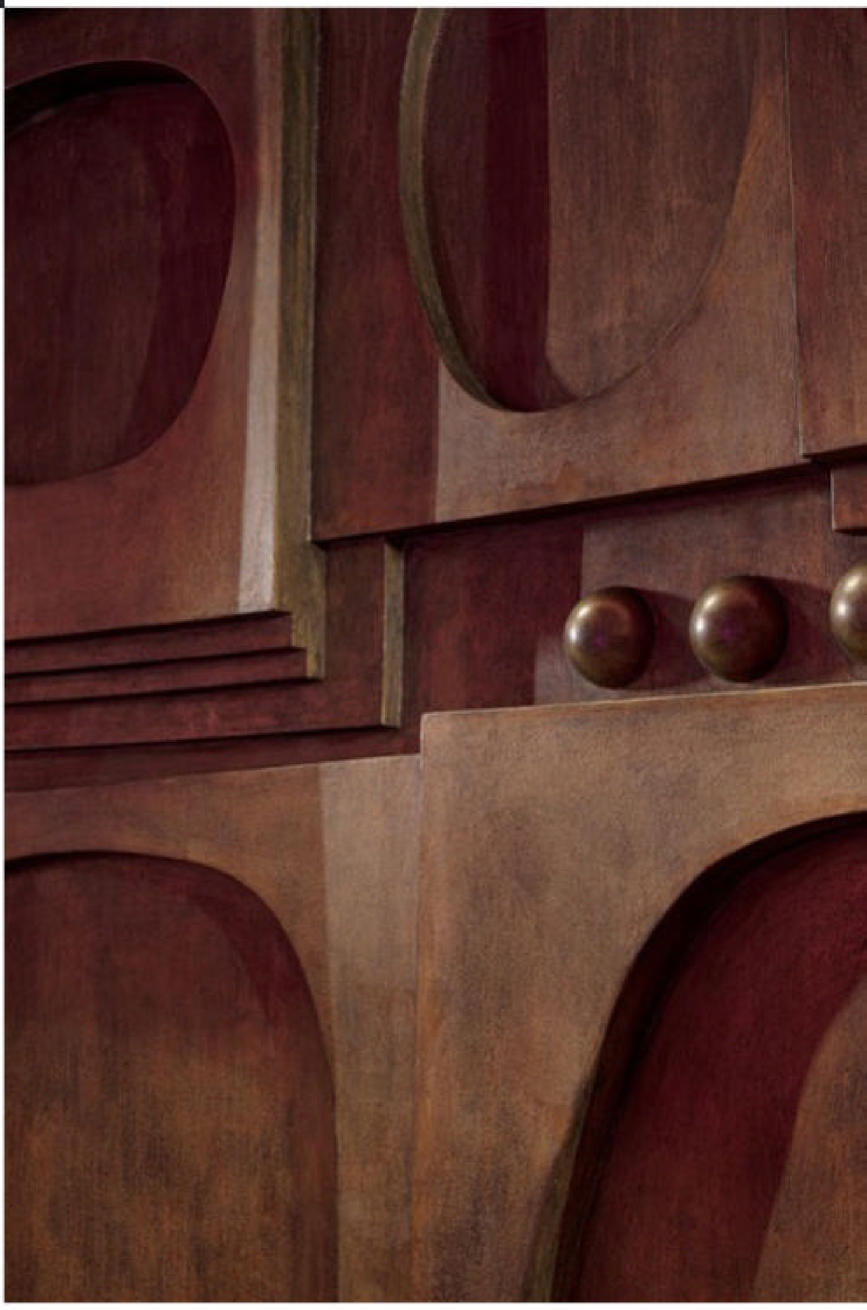
Bubbling Under

Family-run Ca' del Bosco, a Lombardy wine cellar, houses an immersive artistic experience.

by Lisa Young

Ca' del Bosco, located in the heart of Franciacorta in the Italian region of Lombardy, is renowned for creating one of the most critically acclaimed Italian sparkling wines, the Cuvée Prestige, although, "in Italian legislation it is not classified as a spumante, but a wine that happens to have bubbles in it", I'm told by founder Maurizio Zanella.

Top: The new tunnel at new winery at Ca' Del Bosco © Mattia Aquila. Middle: Detail from the new winery © Mattia Aquila. Below: Ca' Del Bosco entrance © Arnaldo Pomodoro.



> *The winery has its origins in the 1960s when Maurizio Zanella's mother bought a small, run-down house (known as Ca' del Bosc), surrounded by a chestnut forest.*

Deep underground in the belly of the Ca' del Bosco wine cellar is a low-ceilinged and dimly lit corridor, where 11 exquisite black-and-white photographs hang in isolation. The images were taken by the biggest names in photography: Helmut Newton; Alice Springs; Don McCullin; Flavio Bonetti; Franco Fontana; Georg Gerster; Ralph Gibson; Eikoh Hosoe; Mimmo Jodice; William Klein; and Ferdinando Scianna.

Zanella commissioned the photographs as part of a privately published book about his winery. Over a period of 11 years, Zanella invited his favourite photographers to document the winery, resulting in a beautiful coffee-table book called 11 Fotografi, 1 Vino, published in 2004. The photographs portray Ca' del Bosco, the wine and the people who work there.

However, my reason for being there was to meet Zanella for a personal tour of his new state-of-the-art wine cellar at Ca' del Bosco, designed by local father-and-son architects, Roberto and Gabriele Falconi. They have worked on the Ca' del Bosco winery since the 1990s. I was about to experience their latest collaboration, making me one of the first of just a handful of people to see the recently completed wine cellar.

Some of the best sparkling wines are made in Franciacorta. Chardonnay is the grape of choice in this region, blended with Pinot Noir and Pinot Blanc. The winery has its origins in the 1960s when Zanella's mother, Annamaria Clementi, bought a small, run-down house (known as Ca' del Bosc), surrounded by a chestnut forest among the rolling hills of Erbusco in Franciacorta.

It wasn't until the late 1960s that the idea of planting a vineyard and producing wine swung into action. Today, Ca' del Bosco has developed into one of Italy's most modern and advanced cellars. Ca' del Bosco covers over 248 hectares and produces around 1.8 million bottles a year. It is considered one of the flagships of the Franciacorta appellation internationally.

I flew into Milan (Linate Airport) and within 90 minutes I was driving next to the crystal-clear water that makes up Lake Iseo: a long, narrow lake that sits between its more famous and larger neighbours, Lake Como and Lake Garda.

On arrival at Ca' del Bosco, a lavish bronze gate depicting the sun slowly opened to allow us access to a winding road leading through vines and onwards to the winery buildings. The gate, another commissioned work of art, is by sculptor and metal craftsman Arnaldo Pomodoro. "From the sun comes the real nourishment of the grape, whose own rays warm and illuminate the gentle Ca' del Bosco hills," says Zanella.

I am welcomed by a pack of large blue wolves: an art installation created by the art group Cracking Art and placed on the roof of the main entrance. Art is important to Zanella, and you can see his chosen pieces

> *Like a glittering scene from a James Bond movie, I was surrounded by golden light coming from the walls of empty wine bottles.*

dotted throughout the winery; he also considers wine to be a work of art. It's hard to miss the striking and memorable life-sized rhinoceros by sculptor Stefano Bombardieri dangling high above the cellar entrance, adding a touch of humour and ruggedness to an otherwise pristine and sleek stainless-steel space.

To experience the winery's latest addition, visitors must first weave between thousands of wine barrels interspersed with works of art and walk through dimly lit corridors and tunnels 17m below ground, where the temperature drops, the walls are made up of vintage bottles and the dark floor is lit by an occasional spotlight. All the while, heavy red-wine aromas linger in the nostrils. Along a corridor, a video by Sicilian artist Giuseppe La Spada played, projecting his piece Voluptas, about the daughter of Cupid and Psyche.

Further into the immersive experience, I reached a circular space called the Dome of the Senses, where four alcoves house installations and immersive activities. In the middle of the room is a lowered lenticular vault in which visitors can look down for a sensory overload. In the centre of the room stands Ludoscopio, a well of light reflected in an infinite background by Paolo Scirpa, a master of immaterial art.

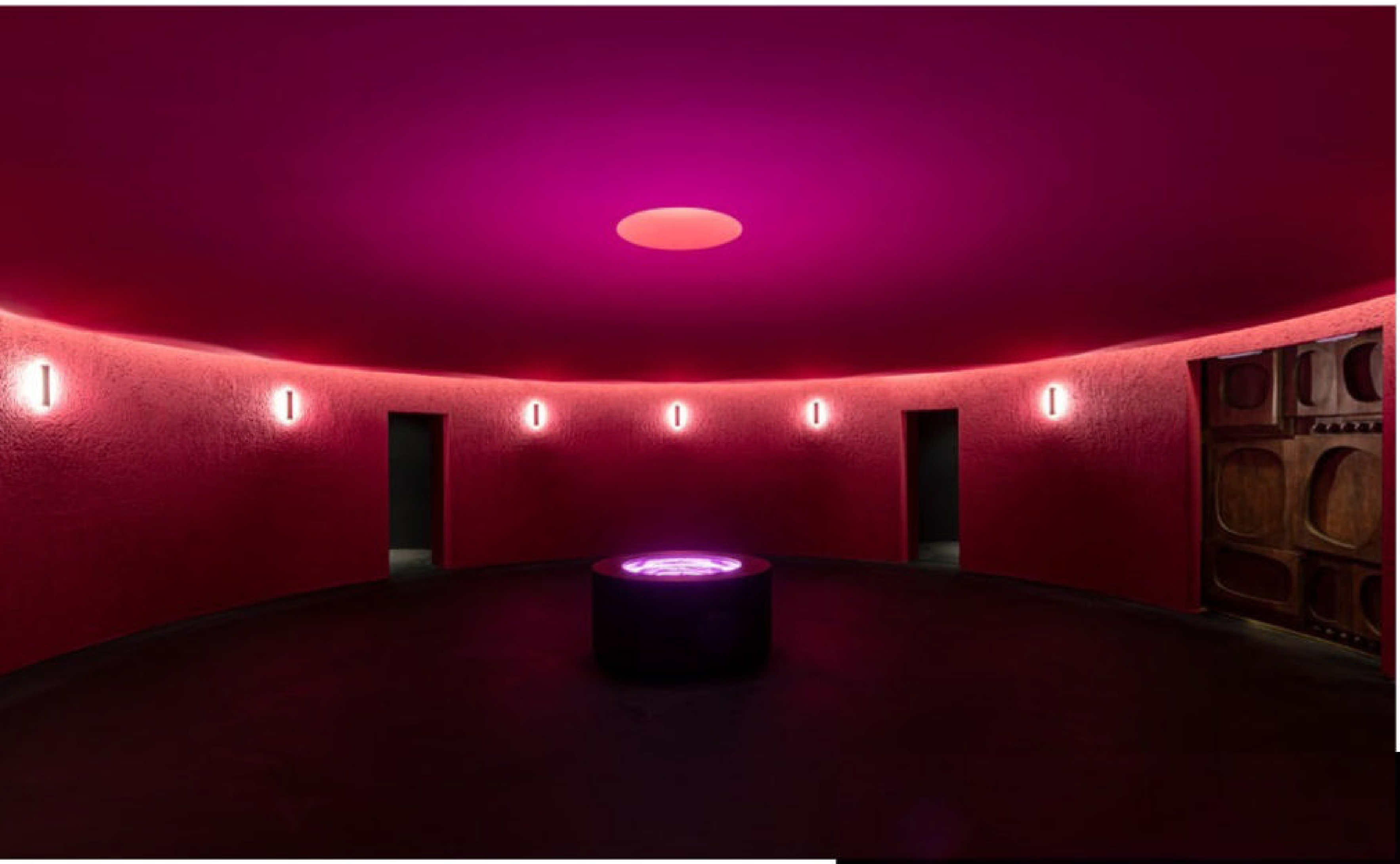
The most immersive creation of all is by the Falconis. The visitor is figuratively immersed in a bottle of sparkling wine: an inverted cone covered entirely with 30,000 empty bottles of one of the winery's most iconic products, the Cuvée Prestige. A large, vaulted door opened in front of me, then a high-tech mechanism composed of a telescopic walkway dramatically extended towards a circular open platform. The walkway retracted and I was left in the middle of a room resembling the inside of a bottle of sparkling wine.

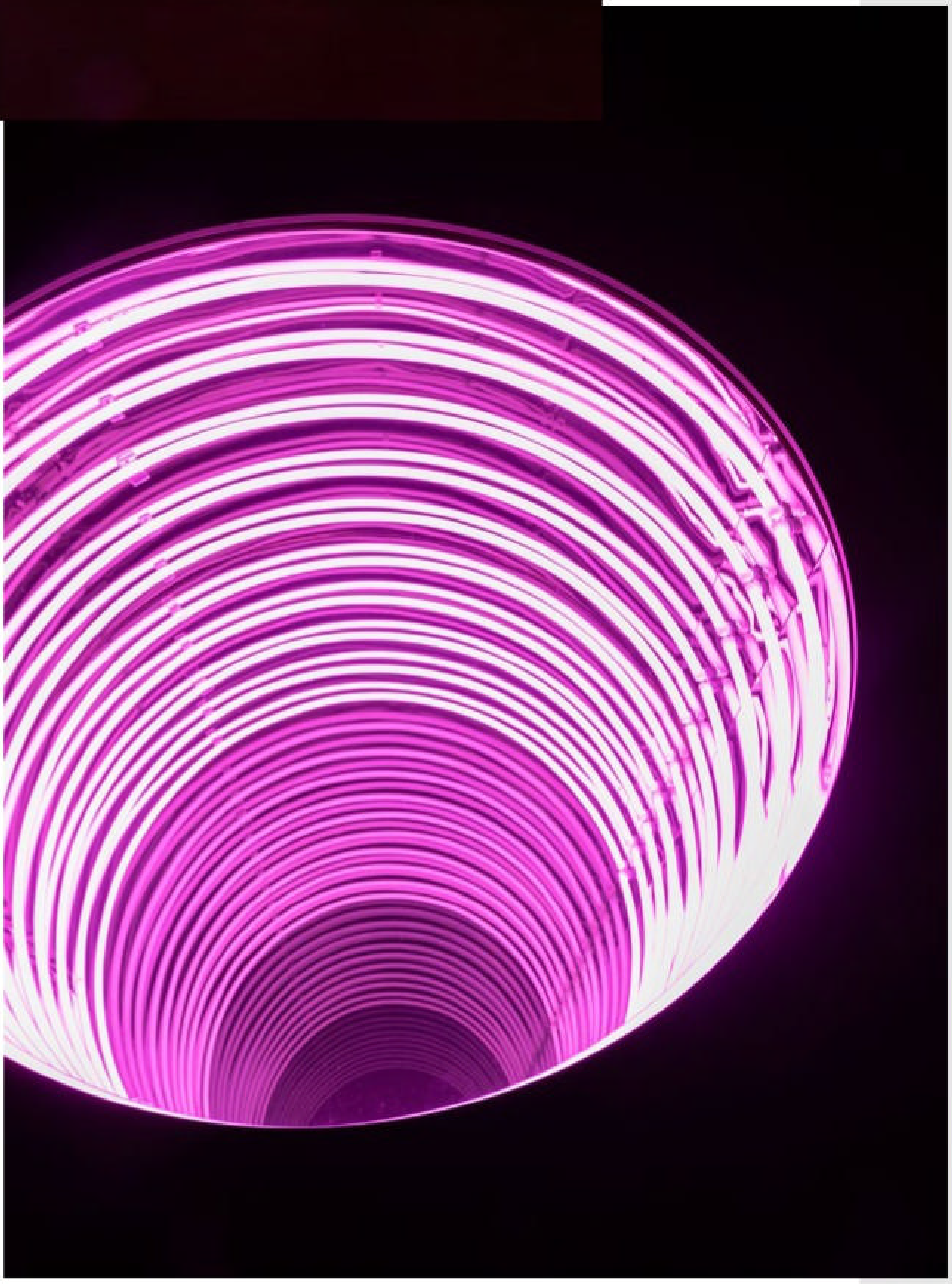
Like a glittering scene from a James Bond movie, I was surrounded by golden light coming from the walls of empty wine bottles with lights inside, arranged in the shape of a bottle. A simple enough design, painstaking to make no doubt, but on a grand scale, with 30,000 bottles, this ambitious architectural project is impressive and totally unique. Looking up, the ceiling resembles the inverted base of a bottle. To top it all (and with a bit of imagination), the panoramic open lift descends to the lower floor, giving its passengers the feeling of being a bubble floating around inside a bottle.

The evening was spent at three-Michelin-star restaurant, Da Vittorio, for an exquisite dinner and fantastic wine pairings from Ca' del Bosco, all selected by Zanella himself.

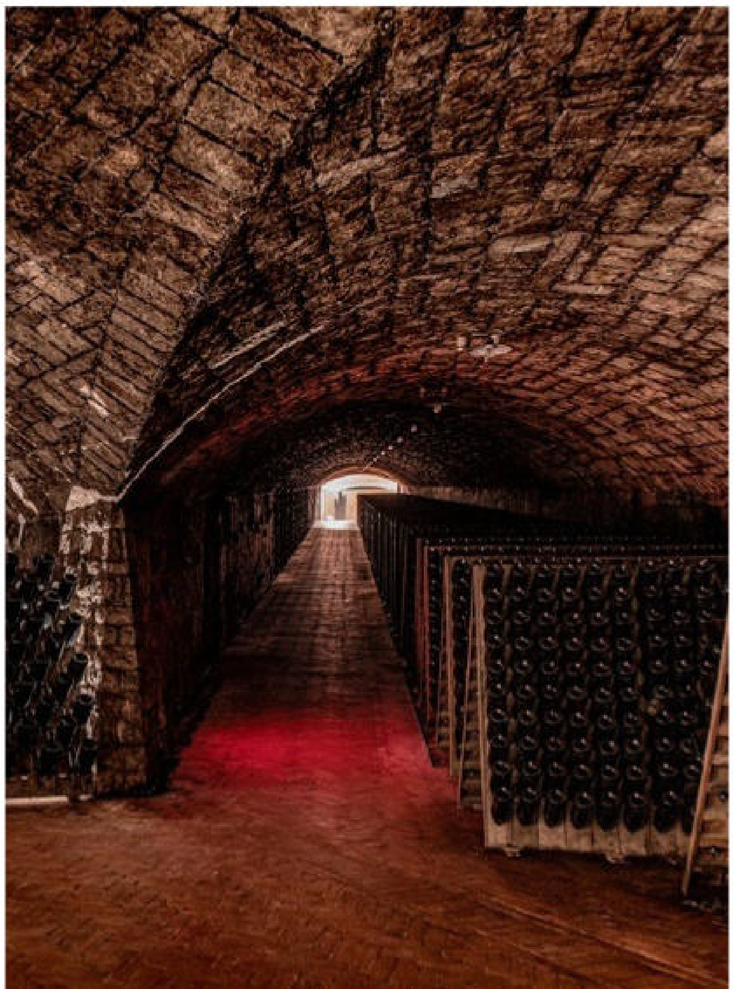
cadelbosco.com/en/

Visitors can explore the new wine cellar at Ca' del Bosco from March 2023. ◇





Top: Dome of The Senses © Mattia Aquila. Middle: Artwork Ludoscopio by Paolo Scirpa © Mattia Aquila. Below: Inside the cellar © Giuseppe La Spada.



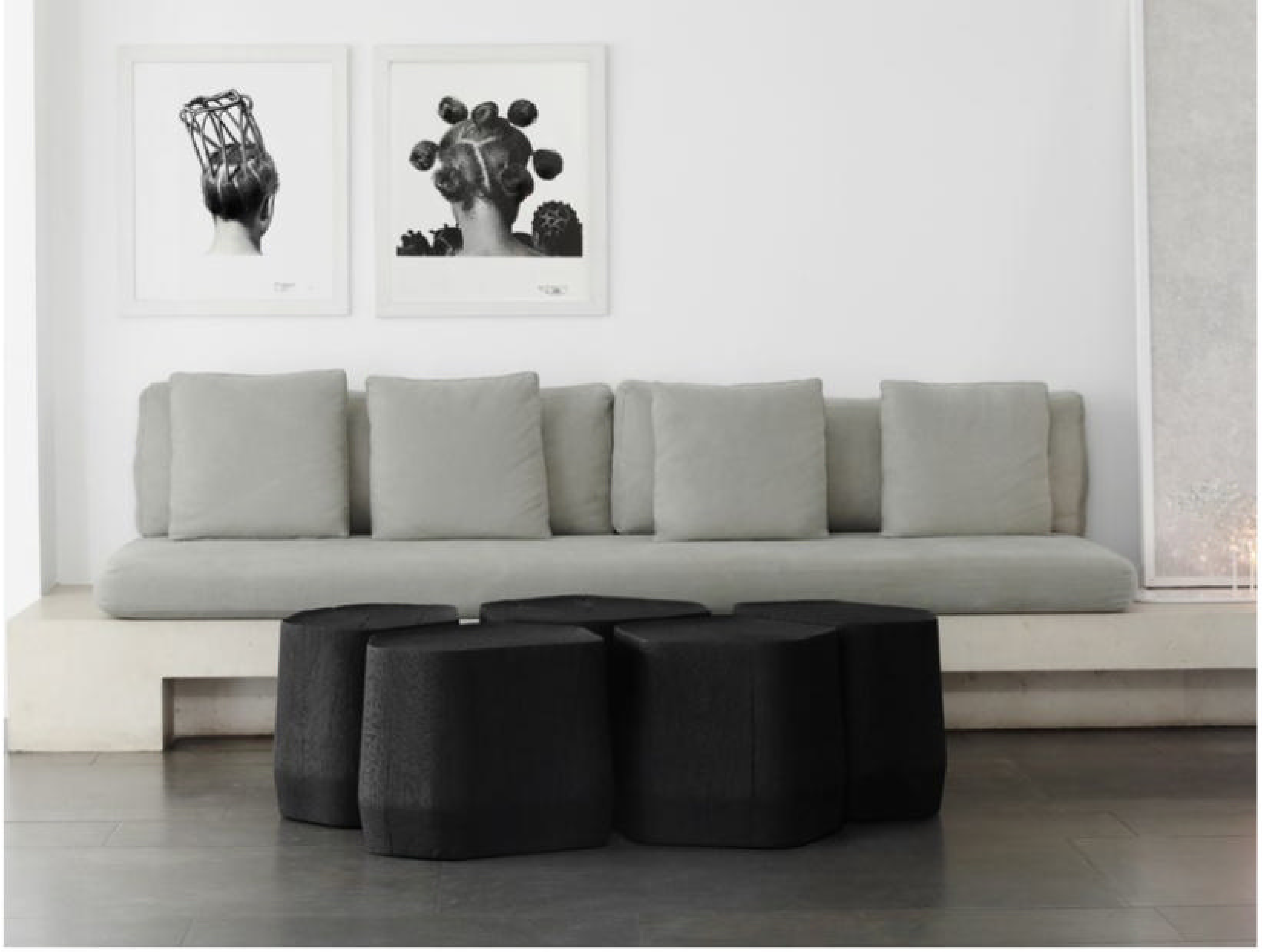
Valérie Maltaverne in the
Ymer&Malta studio.

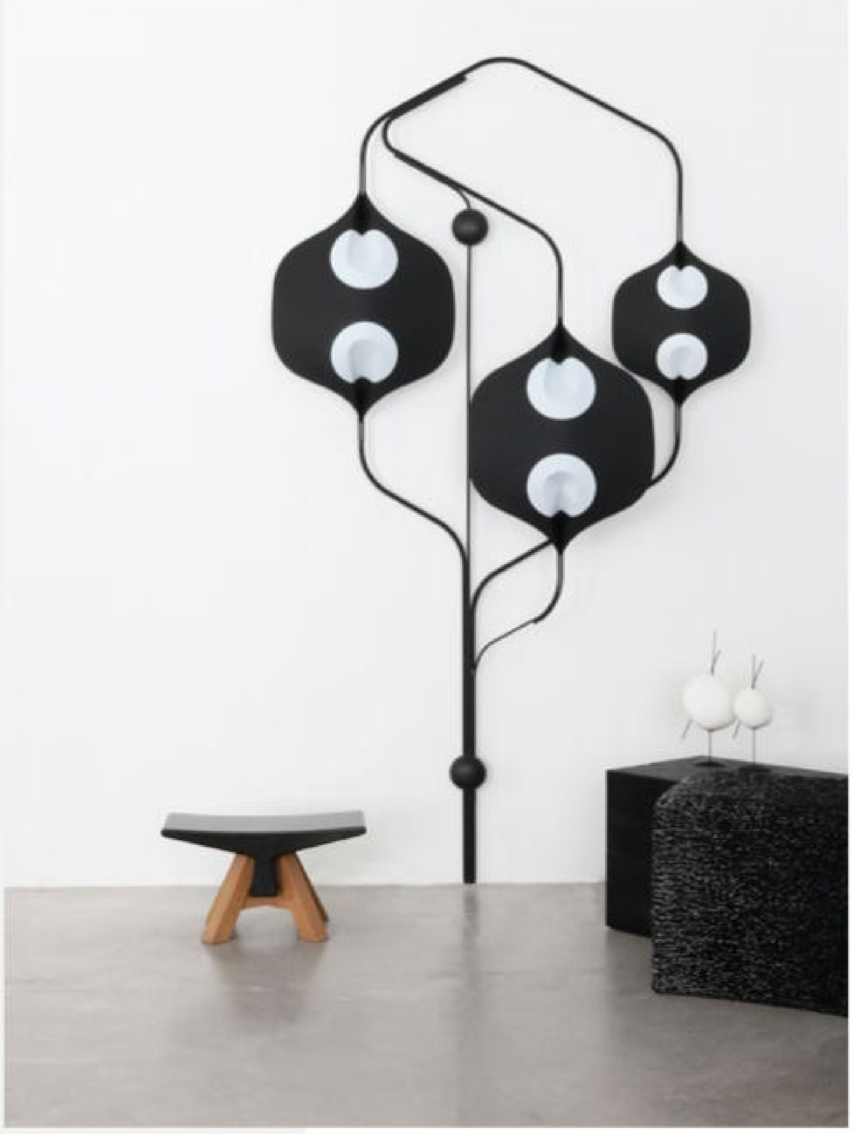
Next Level

Furniture designer Valérie Maltaverne is tireless in her pursuit of perfection.

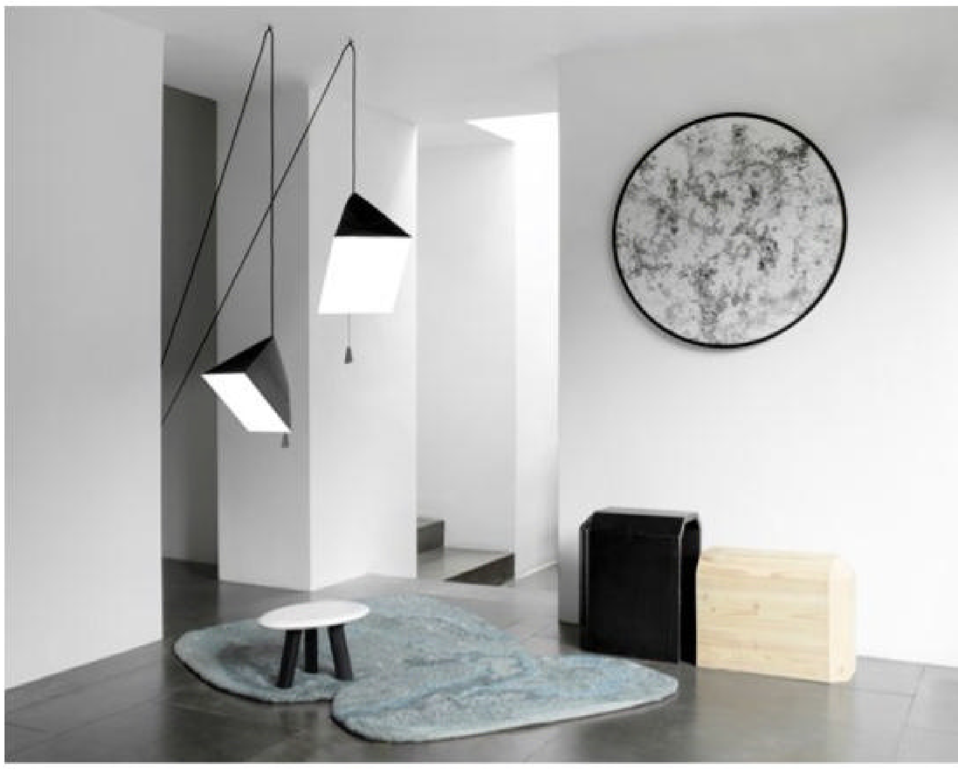
by Tara Loader Wilkinson

Most people opt for the path of least resistance. But Valérie Maltaverne, a former French film executive who is now a furniture creator, is not most people. “When people tell me something can’t be done, that’s where I get my motivation from,” explains the co-founder of furniture maker Ymer&Malta as she welcomes us into her stunning three-storey house in Batignolles, within Paris’s 17th arrondissement.





Top: Basalt coffee tables and a morningMist lamp. Middle: Bone stool with edaLight sconce, Belle de Nuit battery lamps and Bois Brûlé bench. Below : Eau rug, Poise suspensions, hiddenSkin Stools.



"An Ymer&Malta piece needs to make me fall in love, so they are often very poetic and in tune with nature." — Valérie Maltaverne.

Monochrome minimalism forms the basis of her aesthetic; her inspiration, she says, comes from architects such as the UK's John Pawson (for his pared-back design) and Japan's Kengo Kuma (for his focus on natural materials). But her home, framed around a central courtyard containing a Zen Japanese garden, is far from austere. Filled with an array of out-of-this-world furniture-as-art, Maltaverne's dining table is segmented together with reptile skin-like marquetry, her sitting room is centered around four Victory Seats, hewn from smooth shiny calfskin leather with visible stitching, inspired by boxing gloves. The room is gently lit with luminous bubbles, what she calls a Belle de Jour lamp, an exploration of French linen and porcelain. There is a sense, with each extraordinary piece, of otherworldliness. "My inspiration comes from constantly pushing the boundaries of what can be done with modern furniture design," says Maltaverne.

As she takes our coats, the smell of roasting chicken wafts from the oven; the table is thoughtfully laid with bread, butter and fresh flowers for our lunch. Her fluffy cat Siam is curled up on the sofa, barely opening an eye at our arrival. He is clearly used to visitors; the house that Maltaverne shares with her partner and two adult daughters, when they are visiting, doubles as a studio and showroom. "I live with the prototypes, so I refuse to live with anything I don't absolutely love," she says. "A Ymer&Malta piece needs to make me fall in love, so they are often very poetic and in tune with nature."

Maltaverne's story is unorthodox. A self-taught furniture designer, she co-founded Ymer&Malta in 2009 after working in the film and television industries for years, predominantly in cartooning. After taking some time off to bring up her daughters, she decided to change path. Having always harboured an interest in interiors, she turned her attention to the furniture design sector. The name of her company comes from her one-time partner, Rémy Le Fur (Ymer, spelled backwards), who collaborated on the first piece, a Bone Stool, but after realised he did not have the time to combine it with his auction career.

Left : Paysage Polaire console Aubusson Tapestry detail. Middle: sofaScape and Belle de Jour floor lamp. Right : Paysage Polaire console.

"The designers and artisans… like working with Ymer&Malta because it allows them to further develop their techniques. But it must resonate with them in their culture."
— Valérie Maltaverne.

Top: Valérie Maltaverne discussing with an artisan at the Porcelain workshop in Limoges with the Belle de Nuit molds. Middle : Marquetry detail of the cloudInChest cabinet. Below: Demolding a Belle de Nuit porcelain globe.

“The [weavers] were somewhat taken aback at first, but they adapted and enjoyed the process of innovation.” — Emmanuel Gérard.

Maltaverne’s USP? Always make the best of the best, and always work solely with French artisans. “Since the time of Versailles, French makers have been sought after for their skills in decorative arts. We are devoted to French heritage in the same way.”

Fourteen years since launch, Maltaverne already has the satisfaction of knowing her name will be written in the history books. She was made a member of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in 2020. Sixty-three of her studio’s pieces have been exhibited by museums and 26 have joined the permanent collections of museums, such as the Musée des Arts Décoratifs de Paris (which has the cloudInChest cabinet, a fine piece that resembles a pixelated cloud), while the fallenTree bench is now part of the Villa Albertine’s collections in the US. Ymer&Malta’s objects have also been presented in New York at the Cooper Hewitt Museum and the Noguchi Museum. Ultra-wealthy private collectors are also her audience, with prices ranging from €250 to €250,000 for the very rare editions.

Maltaverne believes her resonance stems from transferring her learnings from the cinema industry to furniture design: a unique combination. “In TV and film, you never give up on a scenario, you figure out a way to make it work creatively. You also work as a team, and the relationship I have with designers and artisans, getting them to take their craft to their next level, involves a lot of exchange and communication. They like working with Ymer&Malta because it allows them to further develop their techniques. But it must resonate with them in their culture.”

She adds that each collection takes a time to create, perhaps even five years of trial and error, such as the collection made using Aubusson tapestry, for which she commissioned a small group of weavers in France’s central Creuse area in 2015. From the first meticulous sketches, they invented new knots, used different colours and materials until they had created a series that resembled a novel art form; including Eau, a rug woven to represent melting snow on the ground; and Ours, a cabinet made from dark bog oak imprinted with a woven façade of two bears, and her favourite, Paysage Polaire Console, a mirrored wall-hung tapestry sculpture.

The ambassador for Aubusson approached her with the idea in 2015, in a bid to transform this sleepy, dying French

Work in progress on the Ours Tapestry in Aubusson.

“This is not furniture for furniture’s sake. We create pieces that are exceptional to touch and look at.” — Valérie Maltaverne.

art into high luxury. Bruno Ythier, curator of the Cité Internationale de la Tapisserie and ambassador for Aubusson, says her studio “takes relationships with the artisans to another level. Traditionally an artist who has a tapestry made, works with one or two samples and doesn’t intervene until the finished product comes off the loom…Valérie stays in touch with the artisan… weaving doesn’t start until they are both on the same page”, he says, adding that Maltaverne’s sampling process alone can require as many as 20 samples.

“She pushed the weavers to their limits, forcing them to imagine other textures,” adds his colleague, Emmanuel Gérard. “They were somewhat taken aback at first, but they adapted and enjoyed the process of innovation.”

Besides the successful tapestry collection, Maltaverne took her approach to other art professions, including marble, marquetry, leather, wood, paper, resin and linen, in total 10 collections in a limited edition of five to 12 pieces. Her next step is to work in glass and bronze, she says.

Her tireless pursuit of perfection results in groundbreaking innovations; her success lies in combining an intimate respect for these craft traditions — and the art of living that they represent — with a creative desire to see them evolve.

Maltaverne says: “This is not furniture for furniture’s sake. We create pieces that are exceptional to touch and look at.” ◇

One of London restaurant KOL's signature dishes is a langoustine taco served with smoked chili and sea buckthorn. Squeezed, a fermented langoustine head replaces lemon juice. © Rebecca Dickson.

Flavours of the South

A look at three of Latin America's most innovative chefs, who have brought their cultural flair to Paris and London.

by Clara Le Fort

If you're thinking tacos and fajitas, think again. Latin American cuisine is gaining an elevated status in some of the world's most sought-after restaurants. We speak to three young chefs leading the movement.

Left: A young Michelin star recipient, Mexican chef Santiago Lastra leads restaurant KOL using 95 percent British-sourced ingredients © Maureen Evans. Right: A wagyu taco made using two types of ancient corn varieties. © Rebecca Dickson

Santiago Lastra
London KOL owner Santiago Lastra, who has earned his first Michelin star, has lived away from his home country for 17 years. He says: "The most important thing is to get to know the local produce and how to cook with what you have around you."

What ingredient from your home country do you miss most?
Citrus is one of the pillars of Mexican cuisine so it can be challenging to cook without it. I miss lime and orange the most. At KOL we've developed lots of ways to replace this: we ferment our own kombucha, ageing it for about six months to replicate the same flavour profiles as orange or sour orange. Instead of using lime, we use Douglas fir, gooseberries, or sea buckthorn. Our langoustine taco is a great example of this: our sourdough tortillas come with langoustine, smoked chili, sea buckthorn, sauerkraut and a fermented langoustine head on the side that one squeezes as if it were a slice of lime.

What ancient recipe do you revisit?
I'd say one of my favourite dishes to cook is mole, which means to blend. There are lots of different varieties, some versions are more authentic than others. In Morelos where I'm from, there is a traditional red mole, it's both sweet and savoury with lots of depth. To make it, you need about 25-30 ingredients; it's almost our equivalent to a curry everyone has their own recipe for. At KOL, we take inspiration from the Oaxacan recipe for coloradito mole, but we use British ingredients to recreate it. Instead of plantain we use parsnips, we add carrot, onion, garlic, chili, sesame, almonds, some chocolate from the east coast of Mexico, along with some carrot juice and seaweed oil. The dish comes with smoked purple carrot, fermented blackcurrant, and is served with fresh tortillas.

What traditional ingredient have you revived?
Corn is a very important part of Mexican cooking, so we work directly with indigenous communities. Supporting them means they can grow heritage corn, which they struggle to sell in Mexico for the right price. We work with a collective called Tamoa, which visits communities and buy their produce at the right price. There are so many mass-produced tortillas full of pesticides; yet the moment you try a tortilla that's made with an ancient corn variety, there's no turning back.

https://kolrestaurant.com

Top: Roscoff monkfish, carrot and pineapple mole, vegetal jus. Below: Based in Paris, Mexican chef Enrique Casarrubias runs restaurant Oxte. © Charlotte Schousboe. White chocolate, avocado, lime and Guerrero mezcal dessert at Oxte. © Charlotte Jacobsen

> *“My Acapulco-style ceviche is a take on a local recipe. The thinly sliced seabass is marinated for six hours with different citrus (lime, orange, mandarin, lemon)… and, most importantly, a burnt alpena tatemar chili.” — Enrique Casarrubias.*

Enrique Casarrubias
At the helm of Oxte restaurant near l’Étoile, Paris, Mexican chef Enrique Casarrubias brings colourful, spicy and charred flavours to French cuisine. The chef, who worked at Le Crillon and rose to become Akrame Benallal’s sous-chef, was recently awarded a Michelin star.

What ingredient from your home country do you miss most?
I miss the number and varieties of tortillas, especially the one we make using blue maize. Deeply rooted in Hopi traditions for over 7,000 years, it is central to their culture: drought-resistant, rich in protein, it was always essential to their cuisine. It gives tortillas a richer, denser taste. Today, we make traditional, soft and crispy yellow tortillas respecting the traditions. Using the corn dough, we bake spinach and cheese quesadillas, or craft taquitos — half-size crispy tacos — filled with fried oxtail and served with raw sour cream, a chili sauce and grated cheese.

What ancient recipe do you revisit?
My focus at Oxte is to re-enact recipes from my childhood and upbringing in Mexico. For example, my Acapulco-style ceviche is a take on a local recipe. The thinly sliced seabass is marinated for six hours with different citrus (lime, orange, mandarin, lemon), sliced onions, coriander, parsley, grape seed oil, apple vinegar and, most importantly, a burnt alpena tatemar chili.

What traditional cooking technique have you revived?
I use a traditional cooking technique called tatemar. It consists of overcooking or burning the upper layer of an ingredient to bring its bitterness out. Burning maize leaves, for example, or the skin of an avocado will completely change the taste of the cob or the fruit’s flesh. Tatemar, which comes from the word tatemado, is rooted in pre-Hispanic traditions. It is derived from nahuatl tlatemati, which means to burn, fire. Whenever I can, I flame-grill to bring smokiness and a clear contrast inside a dish.

How difficult is it to create dishes that will be sampled with wine?
Our aim at Oxte is to adapt to French taste and local seasonal produce. We have Mexican wines on our list — such as a Nebbiolo from Monte Xanic in the Guadalupe Valley, or Vino de Piedra from Casa das Piedra — and welcome some of France’s Grands Crus — Vosne-Romanée, Clos de Vougeot, Pommard, Aloxe-Corton, Grand Échezeaux — which are ideally paired with charred meat dishes.

www.restaurant-oxte.com

Left: Colombian chef Juan Arbelaez runs seven different restaurants in Paris and recently opened Bazurto in Tignes overlooking the slopes in the French Alps (above). Right below: Grilled arepas with truffle, corn bread and cheese served at Bazurto Tignes.

Juan Arbelaez
A Colombian native, young chef Juan Arbelaez has quickly made a name for himself in Paris with restaurant Bazurto, which celebrates the sunny, spicy and festive side of his South American heritage. Recently, the celebrated chef opened Bazurto Tignes in the Alps.

What ingredient from your home country do you miss most?
At home in Colombia, the tradition of fresh juices is very important; it simply doesn't exist here in Europe. In the restaurant, I've adapted a white-chocolate dessert with passion fruit. Since the fruits are more acidic, we mix them with a sweeter cream. We add a smoked paprika crumble, a white-chocolate cream, and finish it off with a passion fruit coulis, sorbet and fresh fruit.

What ancient recipe do you revisit?
More than a traditional dish, I chose to revisit the empanada. Everywhere you eat it with your fingers in the street and dip it into aji. Street food is an essential part of the Colombian culture, a shared moment. Whether filled with meat or fish, the empanada is always the same, yet always different. I revisit it using a maize and quinoa dough filled with daily market vegetables.

What traditional cooking technique have you revived?
In Colombia, cooking with fire is the main technique. Today, I would love to rely on firewood grills to bring complexity and spice to my dishes but the regulation in France is strict when it comes to having an open fire in the kitchen. I resort to smoking ingredients using different types of small wood scraps from beech, pine or olive trees. For example, roasted poultry comes with coconut cream that is smoked using scraps and a citrussy beurre noisette. It instantly brings me back to my childhood.

Did you have to adapt to European tastes?
At home, for example we eat very spicy food, which the French palate can't take. It all comes down to adjusting recipes or drawing parallels. For example, we eat a lot of fresh grilled cheese, which I reinterpret in Tignes using local fresh cheese that tastes different. Adapting isn't a constraint, it's a richness.

How difficult is it to create dishes that will be sampled with wine?
I've become passionate about wines; some of the rich whites work so well with a spicy, exotic cuisine. On the wine list, only 10 percent of the wines are South American — from Chile, Uruguay and Argentina — but we also play around a lot with smoked mezcals and aguardiente, for example. ◇

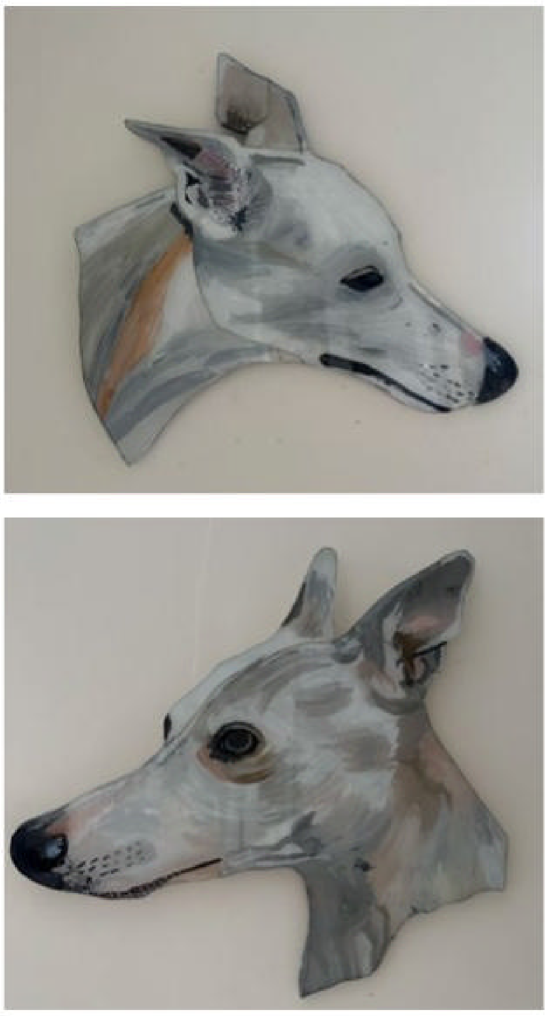
www.bazurtorestaurant.com

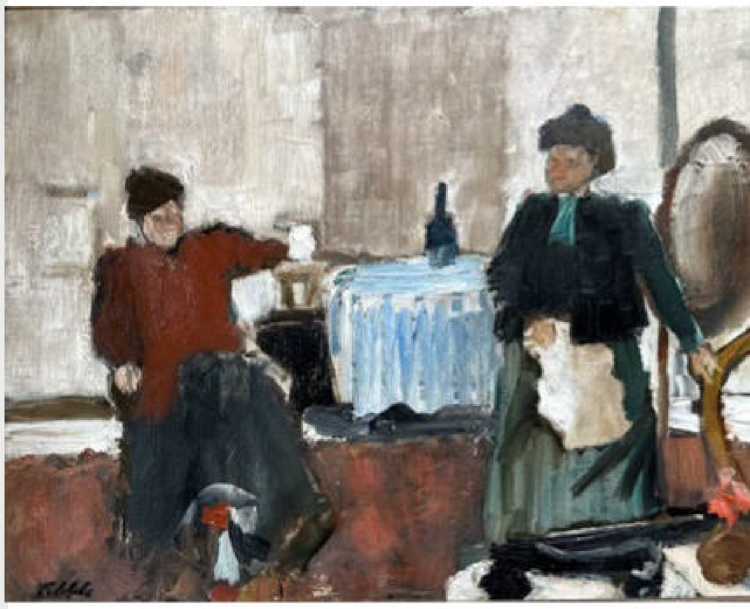
My Favourite Things: Kate Corbett-Winder

Originally a journalist and Vogue writer, Kate Corbett-Winder now paints full time, combining this passion with one for gardening. Her love of nature is evident in paintings that portray favourite plants, corners of her garden and the landscape where her inspiration is fed by the surrounding fields and hills of Montgomeryshire, in Wales, where she lives and paints. She has recently had her fifth solo exhibition at Long and Ryle Gallery. London. She shares a few of her favourite things.

▼ ***Andrew Logan's glass portraits of Coco and Rose***

These wall portraits of our whippets, Rose and Coco, were a present I commissioned from artist sculptor and friend Andrew Logan for my husband William's birthday. They are fabulous artworks, yet so lifelike in the way he has caught their exact profiles and characters. Sadly, Rose died last year but lives on in portrait form. Her sister Coco is 14 and going strong.



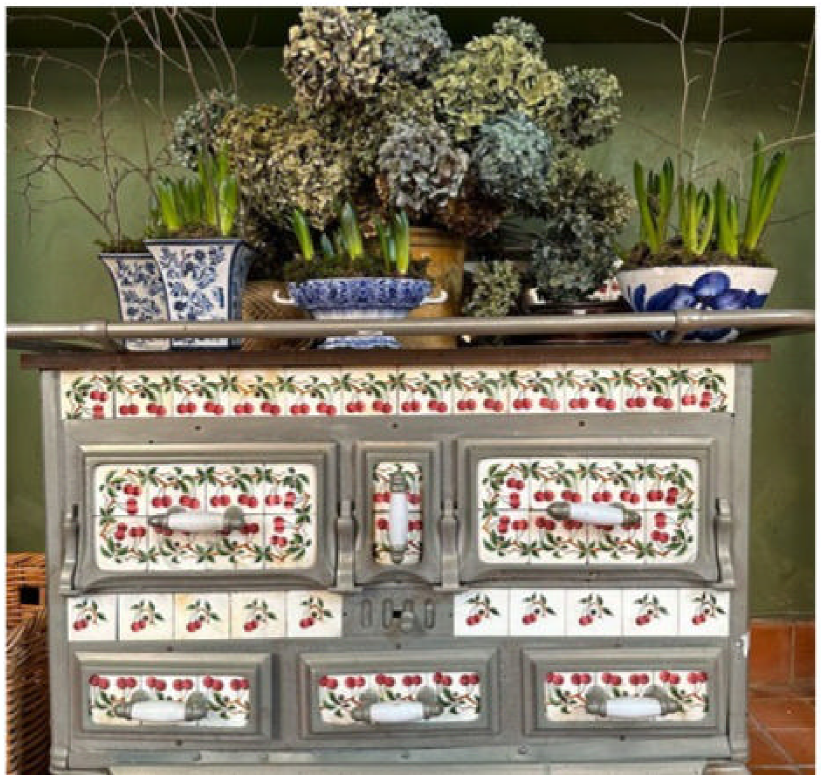


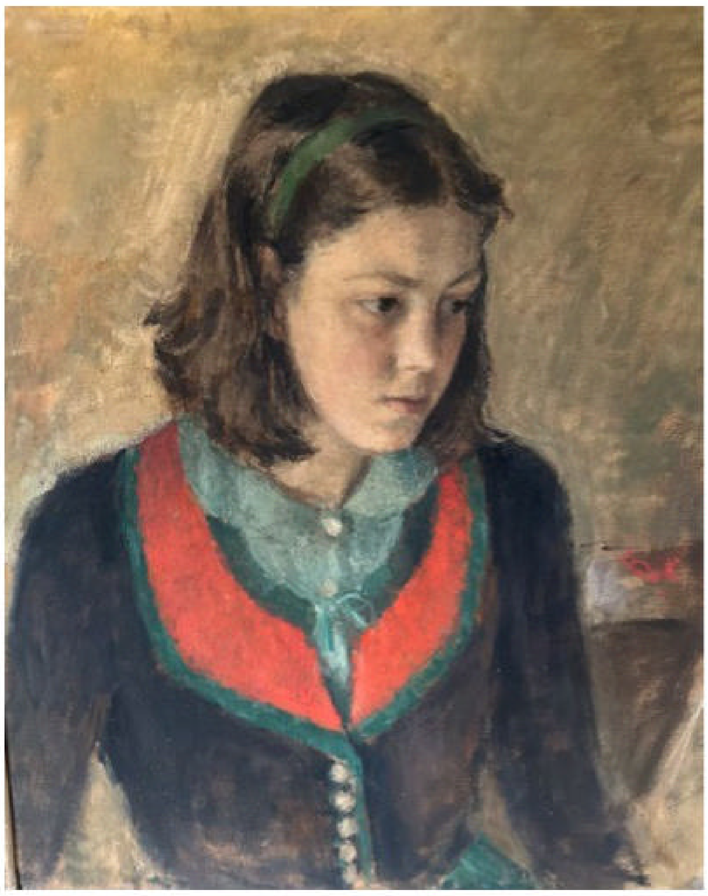
▲ ***Refreshment by Geoffrey Tibble, painted in 1946, given to me by my husband William***

I love the gentle narrative of this painting; its muted palette and how the spaces around the women exaggerate their relationship. It hangs in my bedroom, and I notice something fresh in it most days.

▼ ***The Cherry Stove, a restored Belgian Cuisinière c.1900s***

After moving from Vogue to mid-Wales in 1981 to hunt down eccentric craftspeople. Hence, the discovery of this cherry stove, mid-restoration in a Montgomeryshire barn. The owners ran a laid-back business trawling Belgium and northern France for vintage stoves. It was love at first sight, although, as this gem was not for sale, several years of negotiations followed before a price was agreed. It is a working oven, but it would be too erratic to cook on so has become a beautiful store chest and surface for garden pots and ceramics.





◀ ***A portrait of my mother Gabriel Alington, painted in 1946 by Maurice Feild***

This portrait of my mother was painted by Maurice Feild in 1946 when she was 14 years old, just back from being evacuated to the US during the Second World War. Feild, an early supporter of the Euston Road School was an inspirational art master at the Downs School before moving to the Slade in 1954. He had an influence on Kenneth Rowntree, Lawrence Gowing, Patrick George and Francis Hoyland. As a grandmother encouraging my family to paint, I love the inscription on the back of this canvas, suggesting it was a collaboration between sitter and artist. Sadly, I can't ask my mother which part she painted.

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